

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN AND THE ORATORY SCHOOL, 1857-72:
THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CATHOLIC PUBLIC SCHOOL
BY CONVERTS FROM THE OXFORD MOVEMENT

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the foundation of the Oratory School by John Henry Newman at Birmingham in 1859. The study draws upon a substantial collection of archival material and demonstrates the need to revise some existing interpretations of the school. It was begun at the request of friends of Newman who were anxious, on becoming Catholics, not to forfeit a public-school education for their sons. His chief co-founders were two parliamentary barristers, Edward Bellasis and James Hope-Scott.

After providing background information, an in-depth analysis of the two-year foundational period is conducted in order to determine why and how the school was created. Its novel structure incorporated spiritual superintendence by the Oratorian Congregation, the Eton dame system, and coordinate jurisdiction between headmaster and dame under Newman's presidency. Differing visions of a Catholic public school led to a crisis in 1861 that nearly destroyed the establishment — with resignations all round. With the aid of Bellasis and Hope-Scott, Newman saved the school. He reformed it according to his own pattern, placing an emphasis on a vigorous academic spirit; the importance of knowing and forming the individual; a new balance between freedom and authority; partnership with parents; training for this world and the next. The school's success and influence were severely limited, however, by Catholic attitudes to education and strong opposition to Newman.

The Oratory School was the first attempt to combine two distinct models — the Protestant public school and the Catholic seminary college. As such it is of considerable interest in its own right. The school story also contributes more broadly to our understanding of other areas: Victorian schooling for boys; Newman's character, and his insights into education and the role of the laity; the effect of the influx of Oxford Movement converts into the Catholic body; and changing Catholic attitudes to society.

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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

This introductory chapter begins with a brief narration of the foundation of the Oratory School in order to provide a general context for the thesis as a whole. The contribution to knowledge it intends to make is outlined in the next section. There follows a review of the relevant secondary literature summarising the corpus of published knowledge about the school. It broadly falls into three categories: biographies of Newman, history of education, and studies of the school itself. A review of primary sources indicates the nature and extent of those used in this thesis, and those used by previous scholars. The final section briefly sets out and provides the rationale for the thesis plan.

The Oratory School

The Oratory School opened in Edgbaston on 2nd May 1859 with seven boys, all sons of converts. It originated from the activity of converts of the Oxford Movement who were faced with the dilemma of where to educate their sons. The Protestant public schools, which most of them had attended, were unacceptable for religious reasons, while the existing Catholic colleges were unsuitable for educational reasons. Although the converts were unhappy with academic standards and the system of student-teachers at the colleges, it was principally other arrangements they objected to: the continental regime; the mixing of church and lay boys in what were, effectively, seminary-schools; the close and continuous supervision of boys; the impossibility of providing feminine care for young boys. They considered the regime of a foreign and half-priestly training to be at odds with an upbringing in English virtues and a spirit of freedom.

When, in 1857, it became clear that Newman was retiring from the rectorship of the Catholic University in Dublin and making himself available for work in England, several convert friends approached him with a view to resolving their pressing need. On realising Newman was open to the idea of beginning a school, his friend Bellasis seized the initiative and began promoting the venture. After a series of meetings at which the outlines of a school plan were discussed and agreed upon, Newman was petitioned through Bellasis to found, on behalf of those interested, a lay Catholic public school. Newman's offer, a practical solution to their general request, was to begin close by the Birmingham

Oratory, with Darnell as headmaster, Mrs Wootten as dame and himself as president. Darnell, an Oratorian priest, had the background and talent to run a public school, while the presence of Newman's widowed friend guaranteed the feminine care requested. Newman's scheme, incorporating joint jurisdiction of headmaster and dame, was an adaption of the system used at Eton. This choice reflected the preponderance of Etonians among the school promoters, one of whom, Hope-Scott, became Newman's chief adviser on school matters. Most of the negotiations between Newman and the school promotional body, formed of parents and other friends, took place in early 1858. Attempting to widen support for the plan among both converts and cradle Catholics, the promoters succeeded in obtaining backing from 31 leading Catholics as a way of assuaging fears among the hierarchy about this new departure in the system of Catholic education.

Within three years of opening the number of boys had risen to 70, as old Catholics joined converts in sending their sons. However, outward signs of success masked mounting internal strife. Newman soon became aware that the school was developing along lines other than his own, and that he was powerless to remedy the situation as he had ceded too much control to Darnell. Meanwhile the partnership between headmaster and chief dame deteriorated. A trifling incident sparked off the crisis that nearly destroyed the school: Darnell refused to remain as headmaster unless Mrs Wootten was either removed or put under his command. The dispute was investigated during the Christmas holidays of 1861/62. It ended when Newman accepted the resignation of Darnell, the four masters and the second dame. Only Mrs Wootten remained. Bellasis and Hope-Scott rallied to Newman's side and together they tried to remedy what appeared to be a hopeless situation. The new term started with a full complement of masters, amongst whom was a son of Arnold of Rugby. St John, another Oratorian, replaced Darnell.

After the crisis Newman immersed himself fully in the formation of the school to ensure it developed according to his pattern. Although this involvement continued until his death in 1890, the foundational period can be said to close in 1872. During the period 1862-90 school numbers hovered around 70. Virulent opposition to Newman from Catholics affected the school and checked its growth. The opposition reached a climax in 1867, when Newman was warned by the authorities in Rome for flouting Church policy by encouraging boys at the school to go to Oxford University. To save the school St John

went to Rome to offer explanations on behalf of Newman and his foundation. The visit was a success and thereafter opposition gradually waned.

The school's fortunes were severely tested by the arrival of a second lay Catholic public school in 1877. W.J. Petre's foundation offered a rival version of a liberal education and within three years it had outgrown Newman's school, but it closed for financial reasons in 1884. The expectation of Newman and others that the Oratory School would move into the country, thereby outgrowing direct supervision by the Birmingham Oratorians, was realised only after Newman's death. In 1922 it moved to Caversham Park and in 1942 it transferred to its present site at Woodcote, near Reading. In 1931 it became lay-run.

Justification for this study

The Oratory School is one of the most interesting and important foundations of the nineteenth century. It was unique in being the first full attempt to blend two distinct traditions of education: the Catholic continental and the Protestant English. As such it was an experimental venture. When founded it was the only lay Catholic boarding school, for all Catholic colleges contained a mixture of lay and either ecclesiastical or religious pupils. It was also the first Catholic school in England to break out of the monopoly of direct control exercised by the bishops and religious orders.

The central figure in the establishment of the school was one of the great nineteenth-century figures, John Henry Newman. As the leading figure in the Oxford Movement, Newman is remembered as a deep Christian thinker and a shaper of opinion. The interest in him more than a century after his death, reflected as much in popular publications as in academic research, testifies to his genius as writer, prophet and sage.¹ In particular, Newman is known as the greatest English Catholic writer on educational theory.² The school foundation brought together this original mind with a unique

1. The International Centre for Newman Friends in Rome produces an annual list, *Recent publications on Newman*, which includes books, monographs, dissertations, theses, essays and other articles on Newman and related subjects. It is available from The Centre of Newman Friends at Littlemore, Oxford.

2. C. Dawson, *The crisis of Western civilisation*, London, 1961, p.68

educational opportunity.

The foundation is all the more fascinating for the involvement of other outstanding figures. The parental bodies behind the proprietary schools were predominantly formed from the new middle classes who were motivated by the noble desire to give their children access to the fuller education that was, until then, the preserve of the professional and upper classes. The collaborators of this foundation, by contrast, were almost exclusively from the more privileged sections of society. Access to the best schools for the offspring of the converts was frustrated for a completely different reason: their reception into the Catholic Church. None of the other school foundations at the time could call on an active parental body of such calibre, since the advantages of well-established schools sufficed for most of those with financial means. The friends of Newman involved in the foundation included leading parliamentary barristers such as Bellasis and Hope-Scott, and distinguished scholars such as Allies and Acton. Most had a great interest in education; some were experts.

A detailed study of the Oratory School is required to resolve the conflicting interpretations about it, due largely to insufficient use of the evidence relating to its foundation and early years. Upon these interpretations there rest more substantial theses that extend far beyond the circumstances of this particular foundation. The need for this research has been noted by Alan McClelland, the foremost historian of nineteenth-century Catholic education:

The history of the Oratory School is chequered and involved. It awaits a definite study that will consider its near-collapse and resurrection and will evaluate how the school and its operation brought to the surface serious differences of view within the Oratory itself, at times dividing the community. It is important, above all, to note its foundation was part and parcel of the continuum of the debate about the nature of freedom and authority in education.³

Besides testing past research, this full investigation entails a significant contribution to knowledge. For the purposes of clarity this proposed contribution has been divided into four categories.

3. V.A. McClelland, 'Authority and freedom: John Henry Newman and the formation of youth', *In history and in education: essays presented to Peter Gordon*, ed. R. Aldrich, London, 1996, p.71

Firstly, the foundation can be used as a means to compare the strengths of the two distinct educational traditions it intended to fuse together. In effect, the foundation was an attempt by mature minds to select the best from both systems and to achieve a new educational balance. Two characteristics of the experiment stand out: the absence of any other lay Catholic school for the upper classes, which meant that profound thinking was called for; and the vision and energy of the protagonists, enabling them to rise to the challenge. In practice, however, the venture was heavily constrained by circumstances.

Secondly, this thesis examines the injection into the Catholic body of high-powered converts, bringing with them resolve, initiative and experience, and thereby addresses the observed lack of study of the convert movement.⁴ It also examines the changing relation of the Catholic body to society at large, from a state of isolation to gradual integration. The foundation was located at the cutting edge of this development. The immediate context was educational, but the wider setting was the social and intellectual emancipation of Catholics. Tensions were created within the Catholic body by the arrival of a significant number of converts, arising from their aspirations and enhanced by their pressing needs. The converts highlighted deficiencies such as the absence of lay schools and the dominance of education by the secular clergy and the religious orders. Attitudes of cradle Catholics were challenged: in particular, their self-exclusion from influential society and their self-imposed ghetto mentality. The converts helped generate solutions, not least because of an absence of passive dependence on ecclesiastical bodies. In view of the significant parental involvement, the foundation can be examined as a manifestation of the emerging awareness of the role of the laity, which entailed an appreciation of the shared responsibility by laity and hierarchy in the task of education.

Thirdly, a contribution can be made to Newman studies. Newman's role as schoolmaster in forming the Oratory School has been overlooked, even though it took up a great deal of his time and energies. Newman's contribution to secondary education can be gauged by adapting to secondary education what the *Idea of a university*⁵ mapped out

4. Gilley has noted that the converts have been studied individually, but that there has been little study of the movement as one of ideas: "what is needed is a study of an intellectual tradition". (S. Gilley, 'Loss and gain: conversions to Catholicism in Britain, 1800–1994', *Ransomer* XXXIII/3, Christmas 1994, p.24)

5. Newman's involvement in the foundation of the Catholic University, Dublin gave rise to his classic exposition of a liberal education. His first lectures were published as *Discourses on the scope and nature*

for tertiary education and merging the results with school practice at Edgbaston. It is important to discern whether Newman's views on education changed (as Acton believed they did) as a result of his connection with the school, particularly in light of its major crisis, the Darnell affair. A significant contribution can also be made to Newman's understanding of the role of the laity, as the foundation provided an ideal setting for its application, above all in the working partnership he established with parents.

Finally, this study incorporates treatment of a number of recurring educational themes: parental involvement; problems of control; curriculum issues; the notion of a liberal education; the balance between enforcement of discipline and cultivation of trust; the feminine role in education; arrangements for pastoral care; the education of an elite; and issues of class.

Review of secondary literature

Ward's lengthy biography of Newman, long regarded as definitive, mentions the Oratory School only briefly. Ward records that it was founded at a time of unease between converts and old Catholics, and that the plan initially ran the gauntlet of critical discussion. Few facts are cited. Bellasis is described as a constant supporter and adviser, Mrs Wootten as a matron. Ward openly declines to form a judgement on the Darnell crisis beyond acknowledging that it was a severe trial. The school "did not suffer at all from this revolution" since, with Newman's name, its success was assured from the outset. Although Newman took a great interest in the school, he was not very involved as he wished to pursue more intellectual work.⁶

Louis Bouyer claims that the idea of an Oratory school was deeply rooted in Newman's mind from the late 1840s and early 1850s. He emphasises that Newman envisaged a Catholic school that differed from the colleges, being one in which "the spirit of St Philip [Neri] would prevail, his gentle firmness, his warm-hearted trustfulness, and

of university education: addressed to the Catholics of Dublin, in 1853. The others were published as *Lectures and essays on university subjects*, in 1859. They were eventually published together as *The idea of a university: defined and illustrated* (London, 1873). The critical edition consulted in this thesis is *The idea of a university: defined and illustrated*, ed. I.T. Ker, Oxford, 1976.

6. W. Ward, *The life of John Henry Cardinal Newman* I, London, 1912, pp.452-7

that service which was perfect freedom". Thus the public-school tradition "would be preserved, but purified, and illuminated by the light of grace". To provide out-of-school training Mrs Wootten was to be not just an ordinary matron but a "mistress of the house". The scheme was opposed by Darnell and the masters who resigned, but the school "suffered no great ill". Newman took an active interest in it and in each individual pupil.⁷

Of the four major lives of Newman, Meriol Trevor's two-part opus⁸ has the lengthiest coverage of the school. She asserts that the foundation was the only public venture Newman undertook of his own accord, and the only one to succeed. She identifies Bellasis as the leader of the group of Catholic gentlemen who pressed Newman to start it, while Mrs Wootten is described as being in charge of domestic arrangements. The school's early internal problems are dealt with in considerable detail. Trevor describes how Newman felt elbowed out and how he feared it was developing in a way that would go far to justify the suspicions of laxity entertained by Church authorities. The treatment of these difficulties provides useful background material for understanding the Darnell crisis, which merits a whole chapter.⁹ Using a wealth of archival material, Trevor's narrative is strong on detail but relatively weak on analysis.¹⁰ Its bias in analysing events solely from Newman's perspective is very evident.

This thesis largely relies on Ian Ker's authoritative biography for matters relating to Newman. Though Ker gives the school less attention than Trevor, it still has a high profile: the Darnell crisis alone merits six pages. The leading Newman expert integrates his smaller number of facts into broader issues and patterns. He explains that the crisis was essentially a battle for control of the school and that the real damage it caused was to the Oratory, not to the school. The relationship of the school to the Oratory before the crisis is described, but there is no hint of any modification afterwards. Mrs Wootten's

7. L. Bouyer, *Newman: his life and spirituality*, London, 1958, pp.288-9 & 351-2

8. M. Trevor, *Newman: the pillar of the cloud* and *Newman: light in winter*, London, 1962. Hereafter the latter will be cited as *Light in winter*.

9. It is entitled '1861-1862 School v Oratory' (*Light in Winter*).

10. *Ibid.*, pp.178, 191, 199, 230-6 & 248-64. In Ker's opinion Trevor's biography "hardly purports to be a study of either the thinker or the writer". (I.T. Ker, *John Henry Newman: a biography*, Oxford, 1988, [henceforth abbreviated to *Newman: a biography*] p.vii)

special role is recognised, but not those of Bellasis and Hope-Scott.¹¹

The great merit of Sheridan Gilley's biography is that it tells Newman's story in the full context of the times. He describes the school foundation as an initiative of "Bellasis, and a circle of Newman's London friends". Newman sought to provide an education that was none the less English for being Catholic. Aimed at sons of gentlemen, its class-bound character was evident. The crisis arose because Darnell was developing the school as an independent institution. Gilley's insertion of the affair into the wider scheme of things is inevitably purchased at the price of over-simplification and loss of detail — Mrs Wootten's role scarcely emerges.¹²

A different profile of the Oratory School emerges in literature on Catholic education. Barnes's study of the nine major Catholic foundations after 1793 includes the Oratory School.¹³ The short account of its origins is accurate. It explains how Newman responded to a call from parents who were eager for a school which was "less strictly ecclesiastical" and which permitted feminine influence on younger boys. Advised by six old Etonians, it was emphatically a 'Catholic Eton' that was desired. But while Mrs Wootten understood her position to be that of an Eton dame, Darnell had only experienced the system of Winchester and New College, Oxford. Thus, in practice, Newman's division of jurisdiction was an impossible one, with a Winchester headmaster and Eton dame working at incompatible ideals, "neither able nor willing to understand the other's position". After the crisis "the school developed on the lines of other Catholic schools, rather than on those which had originally been projected".¹⁴

Evennett's account is not dissimilar. Newman's avowed object in founding the school was to meet the wishes of Catholic parents, principally converts, for a Catholic school on English public-school lines, "in touch with the culture of Oxford and

11. *Ibid.* References to the school are listed in the index.

12. S. Gilley, *Newman and his age*, London, 1990, pp.299 & 312–14

13. It covers three from the secular tradition (St Edmund's College, Ware, St Cuthbert's College, Ushaw and St Mary's College, Oscott — the latter two are usually known as Ushaw and Oscott); two from the Jesuit tradition (Stonyhurst College and Beaumont College); three from the Benedictine tradition (Downside School, Ampleforth College and Douai School); and the Oratory School.

14. A.S. Barnes, *The Catholic schools of England*, London, 1926, pp.237–52

Cambridge". Newman "watched over it with loving care until his death", it being his sole permanent contribution to English Catholic education. Its small size was deliberately preserved, enabling "the powerful but essentially domestic spirituality of the Fathers of the Oratory of St Philip Neri to exert its peculiar genius". Rather than pure scholarship, the school's strength was in character building and the inculcation of an attitude of public service, attested to by the number of old boys who attained prominence in public life — a number out of all proportion to its size.¹⁵

The longest account of the school history, by Tristram, appears in 48 consecutive numbers of the *Oratory Parish Magazine*. It focuses on the school in Newman's time and provides very serviceable explanations of the predicament of the converts and the school's early difficulties. The account betrays a reluctance to venture much beyond the school story: obvious interpretations are supplied, but few substantial claims or theories are advanced. Written by an Oratorian, it naturally provides useful detail about Darnell and St John, as well as Newman, yet it is refreshingly even-handed: there is no criticism of those involved in the opposition either to Newman or the school. It is unfortunate that this very respectable history has not been used by other historians.¹⁶

John Jackson's doctorate, which investigates the origins and application of Newman's educational ideas, has suffered a similar fate.¹⁷ Jackson devotes three of his dozen chapters to assessing, in turn, the impact of Newman's family, school and university on his educational thinking. Evidence about the running of the Catholic University is used to challenge accepted views. In particular, he highlights the danger of examining Newman's ideas by concentrating on his writing, while neglecting his

15. H.O. Evennett, *The Catholic schools of England and Wales*, Cambridge, 1944, pp.69–70. Evennett was for a time a governor of the Oratory School.

16. [H. Tristram], 'The Oratory School', *Oratory Parish Magazine* CXXXIII–CLXXX, Jan 1932 – Dec 1935. The authorship is not declared but Mohnen attributes one instalment to Tristram, which suggests it is all his work, as the style is the same throughout. This opinion is shared by Gerard Tracey, the archivist at the Birmingham Oratory.

17. J. Jackson, 'John Henry Newman: the origins and applications of his educational ideas', Ph.D., ?, 1968. The ASLIB catalogue lists Leicester University as the institution where the Ph.D. was submitted, but the university library has no record of it. The copy that exists in the Birmingham Oratory Archives does not specify the institution. This confusion may explain why no reference is made to the thesis in Newman literature.

practice.¹⁸ Jackson's three chapters on the Oratory School cover its foundation, the crisis, and Newman's involvement thereafter. Although he had access to most of the extant primary sources about these complicated events, Jackson only uses a fraction of them. This results in several factual errors and confused explanations. According to Jackson, Newman pretended to start a public school for friends, but instead founded a private school along the lines of Ealing School, where he had been a pupil. He did not even disclose his plans to Bellasis. This entailed a fundamental conflict of interest. Another conflict concerned its relation to the Oratory. The promoters wanted no connection with it, whereas Newman wanted the Oratory to be the controlling body. The crisis originated from this struggle. It occurred because Newman had failed to clarify arrangements at the outset. Jackson describes Newman as secretive and uncharacteristically given to expediency in establishing the school.¹⁹

Willi Mohnen's doctorate is the only major in-depth research on the school.²⁰ His stated purpose was "to illustrate the educational principles of Newman and of a small but influential section of Catholic parents, in order to achieve a clearer understanding of the efforts at emancipation of English Catholics in the educational sphere".²¹ Secondary literature relating to the school is included in his bibliography but there is no review of past research. He relies on the most up-to-date biography available, which is Trevor's. Mohnen knew of the existence of Tristram's school history but was unable to locate it.²² His work is thin on factual content: instead he engages in a general discussion of Newman's ideas on education, compared and contrasted with those of others. He makes good use of the *Idea of a university*, the *Essay in aid of a grammar of assent*²³ and two

18. *Ibid.*, pp.88 & 100-3

19. *Ibid.*, pp.126-7, 134, 139, 143, 145-6, 150, 168 & 190-1

20. W.G. Mohnen, 'Voruniversitäre Erziehung bei John Henry Newman, dargestellt am Beispiel der Oratory School' (Pre-university education in the eyes of John Henry Newman, as represented by the example of the Oratory School), Doctor of Educational Studies, Teachers High School of the Rhineland, Cologne, 1978. Tony Tinkel, head of modern languages at the Oratory School, Woodcote, has made a serviceable translation. References to Mohnen's thesis will be made using the page numbers in Tinkel's translation.

21. *Ibid.*, p.2

22. *Ibid.*, p.9. He cites one of the 48 articles in his bibliography which recounts the saga of Newman and the Oratory at Oxford (*Oratory Parish Magazine* CXLVIII, Apr 1933). It is curious he did not investigate further, given that the article is entitled 'The Oratory School (contd) XVI'.

23. *An essay in aid of a grammar of assent* (London, 1870; 1898) will be abbreviated to *Grammar of assent* in the main text and footnotes.

unpublished sermons on education.²⁴

As Mohnen's assertions are not properly grounded in evidence they are prone to exaggeration and inaccuracy. A tendency to read modern ideas into the past can also be detected. In various ways the conclusions suffer from a narrowness of vision. A lack of sympathy with other leading Catholic figures, and thus a lack of understanding of their outlook and position, makes for an oversimplified context in which Newman is cast as a champion of freedom and his opponents as backward authoritarians demanding an unthinking obedience.²⁵ Little credit is given to education at the Catholic colleges. Like Jackson, Mohnen is too focused on Newman, and the involvement of the promoters, with the exception of Bellasis, is neglected. As almost nothing is stated about the Protestant public schools or the Catholic colleges no proper comparison is possible between them and the Oratory School. The preponderance of general literature on English education and the situation of the Church in England in his bibliography suggests that Mohnen was not at ease with a foreign tradition, and there are several factual errors and misunderstandings in consequence.²⁶

Despite these deficiencies Mohnen's intuition leads him to some very interesting theses. He claims that the new school had three characteristics: that it was confessional, free (from ecclesiastical or religious control) and lay.²⁷ The foundation demonstrated that freedom and confessionality were not incompatible, just as Protestant public schools were independent of the Established Church and thus autonomous institutions. Another important characteristic was that it was a parental institution. The parents involved were not content with a simple imitation of Protestant schools or the infusion of a Catholic

24. 'On some popular mistakes as to the object of education', given on two occasions, on 8 Jan & 27 Aug 1826, and 'On general education as connected with the Church and religion', given on 19 Aug 1827, both Birmingham Oratory archives (abbreviated to BOA from this point onwards)

25. The following examples of propositions of Mohnen illustrate the point: Manning did not perceive the need for educational reform because he was not receptive to intellectual considerations (Mohnen, *op.cit.*, p.77); Faber's pious eloquence impressed simple and uncritical people, but he was intellectually rigid (*ibid.*, pp.74-5); W.G. Ward could not understand that unity in diversity was a mark of Christian freedom (*ibid.*, p.81).

26. Oscott College is described as a Jesuit foundation. Mrs Wootten's appointment as dame "at the express wish of the mothers" is described as a watershed in education, in that "for the first time an educational task of responsibility had been given to a woman in contrast to other schools". (*Ibid.*, pp.87-8 & 94)

27. *Ibid.*, pp.83-9

spirit. They worked with Newman and the masters on a basis of trust so as to rear boys in a spirit of Catholic liberalism. This arrangement constituted a rejection of traditional Catholic education, which brooked no interference from parents. It affected the role of Newman and the staff as internal school matters were largely determined by the parents, though implemented by the Oratory. Thus, claims Mohnen, the school was not controlled by a religious community but by parents. They assumed the financial burden and helped Newman to reach decisions by means of a consultative committee.²⁸

For Mohnen the key to understanding the Darnell crisis lies in the nature of the connection between the school and the Oratory: it was temporary, not essential. The aim was for the school to acquire more self-sufficiency until it reached the "independent state of a free Catholic school which tried on the orders of the parents to realise their educational goals on a Christian basis". The conflict arose from differences between Newman and Darnell regarding the timescale for the achievement of this autonomy: Newman considered early severance dangerous, as he wished the Oratory to provide "family-like security". After the crisis the connection was strengthened.²⁹

Mohnen asserts that an individual initiative such as Newman's was virtually unknown in the Catholic sphere since the Reformation. Newman released himself from the tutelage of Church authorities and tried, in conjunction with parents, to build up a lay Catholic school, one different in all respects from other Catholic schools, and which, through its openness, became an expression of the self-confidence of the converts. Through the school, parents broke up the scheme whereby only bishops or religious orders were responsible for education. According to Mohnen, it represented a clear separation of ecclesiastical and parental responsibility. Being the result of a conscious participation by parents, the school reflected their educational wishes, unlike the colleges which reflected the wishes of the clergy or the religious orders. Newman's educational initiative took into account "the responsible cooperation of lay people", which had declined over the centuries into a state of passivity with respect to the clergy. It supports the idea that Newman's thinking on the role of the laity foreshadowed official Church teaching in the

28. *Ibid.*, pp.88–96

29. *Ibid.*, pp.108–9

Second Vatican Council.³⁰

In his M.Ed. dissertation,³¹ Upton examines why the Oxford Movement converts felt so dissatisfied with Catholic education, as represented by Oscott. He does so by using four reasons given by the promoters for beginning the Oratory School: dissatisfaction with the curriculum, the wide mix of social classes, the background and competence of the staff, and the lack of Englishness and manliness. These illustrate why Oscott was not regarded as a public school, whereas the Oratory School was. Upton's lack of sympathy for the converts and very restricted use of sources lead him to view the foundation of the Oratory School as the deed of upwardly mobile, class-conscious converts, whose values were those of upper middle-class Victorian society.³²

Andrew Nash's booklet *Newman's idea of a school* is first-rate, though short. Using material from Newman's *Letters and diaries* and back numbers of the *Oratory School Magazine*, Nash covers several important themes: the foundation itself, the liberal education provided, the Darnell affair, the teaching staff, Newman's involvement and influence on the school, and the old boys. Various aspects are emphasised: the key role of the parents, the aim of a Catholic Eton, character formation, and Newman's desire to produce educated Catholics capable of participation in the mainstream of English life.³³

The most scholarly work on the school has come from McClelland. In two articles he uses his analysis of the foundation to make substantial claims about Catholic society and education, yet in neither does he make use of the three most developed studies: Tristram's history and Jackson's and Mohnen's theses. Instead he gleans information from the major biographies by Ward and Trevor, from Barnes, and from biographies of Bellasis and Hope-Scott. It should be emphasised that McClelland's coverage of the school is

30. *Ibid.*, pp.95 & 148-51

31. A.J. Upton, 'Oscott College and the education of the Catholic gentry in the nineteenth century: its effect on the converts of the Oxford Movement', M.Ed., Birmingham, 1981. (A different title is given in ASLIB: 'Oscott College and Catholic education in the nineteenth century: a comparison with the English public school'.) The dissertation is no longer kept at Birmingham University. It was obtained from Mrs Upton.

32. Upton comments that: "For the old Catholics religion was their great bond, for the new Catholics, class remained the social cement." (Upton, *op. cit.*, pp.1, 3-4, 34-5, 46-8, 50 & 57-8)

33. A. Nash, *Newman's idea of a school*, Woodcote, 1990

coloured by two traits: his reputation for treating Newman harshly³⁴ and as "One of the fiercest critics of the independent sector".³⁵

In his article on the establishment of the school³⁶ McClelland's analysis gives rise to three types of broader argument: about the Catholic body and its system of education; about the mixing of converts and old Catholics; and about Newman. Unhappy with arrangements at the colleges, the old Catholic aristocracy used Newman to secure a socially exclusive education for their sons, and were joined by the converts. Catholic leaders were alarmed at this alliance, as the scheme smacked of former ventures of the aristocracy to shake off episcopal guidance. Newman was intent on forging links with the Catholic aristocracy and used the school as a means for doing so, despite the distortion the foundation caused to the Oratorian vocation and the deep-rooted opposition from within the Birmingham Oratory.³⁷

The departure of Darnell and the masters after the crisis was a tragedy for the school. As a result it never became a major force in Catholic education. Instead it became one of many dotted round the country leading to a dilution and weakening of teaching power. It conformed to the pattern of the first half of the nineteenth century during which Catholics lavished money on many boys' schools when few or one would have been better. The trinity of superiors had not augured well. Mrs Wootten had been appointed because Newman was indebted to her for assisting him and the Oratory. Newman chose to read into disagreements between Darnell and Mrs Wootten a reluctance by Darnell to allow Newman to interfere in the day-to-day running of the school. Darnell had little

34. Sire judges that McClelland's *English Roman Catholics and higher education, 1830–1903* (Oxford, 1973) was "deprived of value by violent prejudice and equally violent distortion", seemingly "written with the primary intention of denigrating Cardinal Newman". (H.J.A. Sire, *Gentlemen philosophers: Catholic higher studies at Liège and Stonyhurst College, 1774–1916*, Worthing, 1988, pp.3 & 20–1) Ker criticises the book's "tendentious prose" and inadequate use of available source material. (Ker, review of *English Roman Catholics and higher education, 1830–1903*, *Downside Review* XCI, 1973, p.314)

35. J. Arthur, *The ebbing tide: policy and principles of Catholic education*, Leominster, 1995, p.124. Arthur quotes from McClelland to substantiate his claim: "It is a scandal to witness the energy devoted by priests and Religious to providing an exclusive education for the children of the rich, thus blessing and perpetuating within the body of the Church itself the social division of secular society which militates against the fullness of Christian living." (J. Cumming & P. Burns (eds), *The Church now*, London, 1980, pp.112–13)

36. McClelland, 'A Catholic Eton: by hook or by crook? John Henry Newman and the establishment of the Oratory School', *Aspects of Education* XXII, 1980, pp.3–17

37. *Ibid.*, pp.4 & 6–12

choice but to resign as Newman was bound to back a generous supporter rather than a troublesome member of his own community.³⁸

In a later article³⁹ McClelland combines the findings from his research on the foundations of Newman and Petre.⁴⁰ The title — 'School or cloister? An English educational dilemma, 1794–1889' — suggests there was a problem of identity for English Catholic education as there was no purely ecclesiastical or purely lay school. The first attempt by the Catholic aristocracy to found a school for the laity only, in 1794, was thwarted. Characteristics of the laity's plan — "exclusive education" and freedom from "episcopal surveillance" — provide a useful key for understanding the foundation of the Oratory School. The Catholic gentry made "two bold attempts" in the second half of the nineteenth century to disrupt the pattern of clerical–lay education. The first resulted in the Oratory School. It "ultimately failed to fulfill the required needs and expectations", largely because of "Newman's hypersensitive personality and of his inability to work in harmony with the first headmaster". Although the second attempt, Petre's school, collapsed, McClelland judges it "might have been much more successful" than Newman's but for Petre's financial impracticality and his reluctance to appeal for financial support.⁴¹ Unhappy with the social mixing of the secular colleges⁴² and distrustful of the Jesuit system of education, the aristocracy eventually opted for monastic schools. However, both gentry and converts had reservations about this "close association with the cloister": in this lay their dilemma.⁴³

Other historians attribute the foundation of the Oratory School to a different quarter of the Catholic body. Battersby regards it as the first result of the new spirit

38. *Ibid.*, pp.12–15

39. McClelland, 'School or cloister? An English educational dilemma, 1794–1889', *Paedagogica Historica* XX, 1980, pp.108–28 (reprinted in *English Benedictine History Symposium* XV, 1997, pp.1–30)

40. McClelland, 'The liberal training of England's Catholic youth: William Joseph Petre (1847–93) and educational reform', *Victorian Studies* XV, 1972, pp.257–77

41. McClelland, 'School or cloister?', pp.115–18 & 121–7

42. The term 'secular colleges' is used to describe those run by the secular clergy, while those run by religious orders are called 'religious colleges'.

43. McClelland quotes from 'Bishop Hedley's Address on School Work, delivered at Ampleforth College on the re-opening of studies, August 28, 1877', *ibid.*, pp.123–4. In it, Hedley, a Benedictine, extols the advantages of Benedictine education over the secular and Jesuit colleges.

introduced into Catholic education by the converts.⁴⁴ Altholz makes the more daring claim that "Edgbaston School, the first of the English Catholic public schools, represents the most lasting institutional accomplishment of the Liberal Catholic movement in England". This movement, which began in the late 1850s and petered out in the 1870s, was led mainly by Oxbridge converts.⁴⁵

Three observations can be made from this brief review of secondary literature relating to the Oratory School. Firstly, except for Nash, none of those researching the foundation — Jackson, Mohnen, McClelland and Upton — uses the findings of others. Secondly, no clear answers emerge to several fundamental questions about the foundation. Thirdly, the only serious attempt to place the Oratory School in the context of developments in education and society, reaches conclusions that conflict with the majority view: that the founding impetus derived principally from the converts, and that their primary aim as founders was to establish a school by merging two traditions. It is the historians of Catholic education who make the point with greatest effect.

No coherent picture emerges of the characteristics of the new school, a surprising oversight in view of the explicitly innovative aspirations of its founders. Only Jackson has taken up the challenge of identifying precisely what was entailed in this first experimental Catholic public school; what was envisaged in 1859 and how it was modified in response to events. Neither is it clear who was ultimately responsible for its characteristics. Control of the nascent school was in Newman's hands, but its relationship with the Oratory is unclear. The school's relative independence from ecclesiastical control is noted by both McClelland and Mohnen. The special role of Mrs Wootten as dame, in response to parental demand, is adverted to by most, but is variously and vaguely described. The role of Bellasis suffers similarly or is overlooked. Only Mohnen sees in it something quite special: an indication of a key characteristic of the foundation — the prominent parental involvement.

44. W.J. Battersby, 'Secondary Education for Boys', *The English Catholics, 1850–1950*, ed. G.A. Beck, London, 1950, p.325

45. J.L. Altholz, *The liberal Catholic movement in England: the 'Rambler' and its contributors, 1848-1864*, Montreal, 1962, p.139

Literature before Trevor's biography attributes the cause of the Darnell crisis to the incompatibility of the roles of headmaster and dame. Thereafter verdicts have emphasised other factors: the battle for control; the differences between Newman and Darnell regarding the rate of achieving independence from the Oratory; the dilemma over whether or not there should be an Oratorian connection at all; and Newman's inability to work with Darnell and favouritism towards Mrs Wootten. Apart from McClelland's dissentient line, there is general agreement that the school suffered no harm on account of the crisis. Only Barnes and Mohnen allude to significant modifications in the aftermath.

With the exception of Ward, the consensus is that Newman's involvement in the school's formation was considerable, especially after the crisis. Yet details of this involvement are not supplied, except by Jackson, Mohnen and Trevor. Apart from Jackson and Mohnen (and Nash building on Mohnen's work) there has been no attempt to assess Newman's contribution to the development of secondary education or to explain how he wanted the school to be run. Mohnen recognises that the school was located at the meeting point of conflicting bodies of opinion: between converts and cradle Catholics; between those content with the state of Catholic education and those eager for reform; between the champions of the Catholic, continental method and the supporters of the public-school model. He uses these ideas to explain the rough treatment the school received. Apart from him, only Ward and Ker recognise its precarious position. McClelland alone has offered explanations as to why it did not acquire the status of the leading Catholic school and become the undisputed Catholic Eton.

Researching present-day confusion in Catholic educational policy, James Arthur has investigated the historical background and concluded that the sequence of events in the nineteenth century by which schooling became "an enterprise led and dominated by the clergy, under the firm control of the bishops, remains obscure".⁴⁶ This research on the Oratory School sheds light on the matter by revealing the tensions at work in perhaps the most significant lay Catholic educational initiative at the time.

46. Arthur, *The ebbing tide*, p.11

Primary sources

The present-day scholar who undertakes research connected with Newman does so with an enviable advantage over others: the publication of most of the 31 volumes of the *Letters and diaries of John Henry Newman*.⁴⁷ The diaries and more than 20,000 letters constitute a source unrivalled in size and richness in nineteenth-century English history. The ease of access to such a large number of primary sources has facilitated a full study of the foundation and early life of the school. Mohnen makes abundant, though unsystematic, use of them; Ker's biography reflects his mastery of their contents; McClelland relies on research carried out before their publication even though the relevant volumes were already available.

The archives at the Birmingham Oratory contain numerous documents besides those written by Newman, many of which relate to the school. Apart from 53 letters and six other documents given in full in the *Letters and diaries*, the archives contain a further 120 letters and 14 other documents relating to the foundational period. Of these only 15 are cited in part in the *Letters and diaries*. The additional correspondence is mainly of two types: letters among the small circle of Newman's close friends who were actively engaged in moving the idea of a school into reality; and those between this group and a wider circle in the attempt to enlarge backing for the experiment. The correspondence indicates that an elevated and informed debate was taking place on profound educational, religious and social issues. Discussion that descended to practical matters invariably involved important principles.

Other documents from the foundational period are also enlightening: a notebook used at the promoters' meetings; memoranda of Bellasis; advice from Hope-Scott; plans of proposed school buildings; draft versions of the school manifesto; and a list of subscriptions and guarantees for the school. A particularly useful item is the *Memorandum*

47. All but volumes IX–X have been published: XI–XIII, C.S. Dessain (ed.), London, 1961–63; XIV–XV, C.S. Dessain & V.F. Blehl (eds), London, 1963–64; XVI–XX, C.S. Dessain (ed.), London, 1965–70; XXI, C.S. Dessain & E.E. Kelly (eds), London, 1971; XXII, C.S. Dessain (ed.), Oxford, 1971; XXIII–XXXI, C.S. Dessain & T. Gornall (eds), Oxford, 1973–77; I–IV, I. Ker & T. Gornall (eds), Oxford, 1978–80; V, T. Gornall (ed.), Oxford, 1981; VI–VIII, G. Tracey (ed.), Oxford, 1984, 1995 & 1999. *Letters and Diaries* will be abbreviated to *L&D* in the footnotes.

on the proposed new Catholic school for boys which contains a transcription of important letters and a connecting narrative that summarises events in the critical period 30 January to 8 March 1858. This was reworked and published by Bellasis's second son.⁴⁸

Besides the foundation itself, the Darnell affair was the event that had most bearing on the school's early fortunes. It is of crucial importance to the historian. Fortunately a wealth of primary sources relating to it survive. Some 106 letters and seven other documents are fully reproduced in the *Letters and diaries*, and 13 letters in other printed sources. Beside these, the Birmingham Oratory archives contribute another 173 letters and 18 other documents. The correspondence covers various aspects of the affair: earlier internal troubles, in which parents attempted to assist Newman; the dispute between Darnell and Mrs Wootten; Newman's efforts to resolve it; attempts by the Birmingham Oratory Congregation to do the same; the resignation of the masters and their subsequent activity; the rescue of the school by Bellasis, Hope-Scott and Newman; the reaction of parents and others to developments; and the changes implemented after the crisis. Documents other than letters which contribute significantly to an analysis of the affair include the following: memoranda by those involved in the dispute; papers read at the three Congregation meetings; Newman's memoranda on the alleged incompatibility of the school with the Oratory Rule; school notices and prospectuses; circular letters to parents; terms of engagement for masters; the diary of a rebel master; and St John's memorandum on religious instruction.

A list of all documents relating to the foundational period and the Darnell affair is given in Appendix I, in chronological order. It is highly probable that Newman was responsible for the archival collections for 1857–59 and 1861–62. Their compilation suggests the primary importance, in Newman's eyes, of these events for the school. The name and contents of the collection labelled 'Bellasis's album' suggest it was the result of Bellasis's initiative or of one of his sons. The archival material not contained in the *Letters and diaries* has scarcely been used, except by Trevor.⁴⁹

48. Bellasis, *A contribution towards Oratory School Annals: the year 1858*, London, 1887. Newman was delighted with the publication which he could not fault, except for its brevity. (Newman to Bellasis, 24 Jun 1887, *L&D* XXXI, p.216)

49. Tristram's school history was written using primary material from the archives, but it by no means exhausts what has since appeared in the *Letters and diaries*. It contains some information that does not

There are relatively few primary sources with which to investigate other phases of the school's development besides the contents of the *Letters and diaries*. Other archival material at the Oratory includes a timetable, dormitory rules and other school notices; two privately printed schoolboy diaries for 1864–65 and 1866–70; prospectuses with additions and alterations; a list of masters, their duties and pay; prize lists, exam classifications and a record of leavers' destinations; lists of donations; Newman's memoranda concerning the relation of the school to the Oratory; St John's diary for 1862; a ledger containing financial transactions for 1861–78, with numerous annotations; and annual accounts. The Register of Decrees of the Congregation contains decisions affecting the school. The Congregation minute book contains, *inter alia*, Newman's blueprint for the administration of the school.

The *Idea of a university* and the *Grammar of assent* are two major and indispensable sources for understanding Newman's theory of education. Both have spawned much secondary literature.⁵⁰ Two other rich sources are *My campaign in Ireland*,⁵¹ and *Historical sketches*, volume III.⁵² Among Newman's unpublished work are the two sermons on education which only Mohnen has used. The *Oratory School Magazine* which began in 1891 contains memoranda of past pupils. The Oratory School archives contain little serviceable material as the oldest contents were destroyed in the school fire of 1926. Arundel Castle archives contain 23 letters from Mrs Wootten to the Duchess of Norfolk and the reminiscences of a French teacher at the school from 1859 to 1865.

The list of manuscripts at the Oratory archives, contained in Appendix I, shows that the sources are not constrained by their relation to Newman: many are neither by, to or from him. The wary and critical tone of some of the correspondence towards Newman or the school confirms an absence of bias in the retention of material. The danger of an

feature in the *Letters and diaries*. Either the sources were lost, misplaced or not deemed worthy of inclusion, or else they may be attributable to aural tradition at the Birmingham Oratory.

50. A list of secondary sources on the *Idea of a university* can be found in J.R. Griffin, *Newman: a bibliography of secondary studies*, Virginia, 1980, pp.115–25.

51. *My campaign in Ireland, Part 1: Catholic University Reports and other papers*, printed for private circulation, 1896, Littlemore archives

52. *Historical sketches* III (London, 1872; 1909) is dedicated to Hope-Scott.

overemphasis on Newman through using a restricted range of sources is further diminished by consulting, wherever possible, sources outside the Oratory archives, such as the correspondence and memoranda of the school promoters. The diversity of sources is strengthened when the radius of input is widened to include the diaries, memoirs or biographies of masters, parents and others connected with the school.⁵³ As these individuals were highly articulate, a generous policy has been adopted in quoting sources. Newman's mastery of prose and originality justifies the extensive sampling of his correspondence and writings.⁵⁴ His need to write in order to think makes his thoughts wonderfully transparent.⁵⁵ There is a vast literature on Newman's educational theory but, as Mulcahy observes, it is predominantly based on his educational writings.⁵⁶ This research does more than widen the range of literature examined. It uses all the available evidence to analyse Newman's educational practice in establishing a school over a 34-year period, concentrating on the first 16 years.

Plan of thesis

An understanding of the forces at play in the establishment of the school relies on an appreciation of contemporary movements, the historical backdrop and biographical detail, all of which merits a chapter of background information. A potted history of the emergence of the English Catholic body from recusancy provides the setting for the slow process of emancipation. The tale of the growth of its collegiate system of education against formidable odds helps to explain the idiosyncrasies it had acquired by the mid-nineteenth century. The catalyst for change was the addition of converts: from this

53. This includes Acton, Arnold, Belloc, Döllinger, Hopkins, Marshall, Moody, St John, La Serre and Simpson.

54. Ker argues the point thus: "The subtlety of Newman's highly nuanced approach to complex issues constantly discourages any bland, reductive paraphrasing, in favour of the exact rendering of his own words which alone so often convey the fulness of his thought". (Ker, *Newman: a biography*, p.ix)

55. Newman considered: "I think best when I write. I cannot in the same way think when I speak." (Newman to Bellasis, 12 Mar 1871, *L&D* XXV, p.300)

56. D.G. Mulcahy, 'Newman's retreat from a liberal education', *Irish Journal of Education* VII, 1973, pp.12-13. To the general rule, he cited two exceptions: A.D. Cullen's *The imperial intellect: a study of Newman's educational ideal* (New Haven, 1955) and F. McGrath's *Newman's university: idea and reality* (London, 1951). Even so, Jackson contends that McGrath neglected Newman's practice by concentrating on the historical background to the university foundation, and hints that Cullen does so by focusing on his educational theory. (J. Jackson, *op. cit.*, pp.61-2 & 84)

influential group came the protagonists of the school story. Their educational background is crucially important.

The third chapter, on the foundational period, makes extensive use of primary sources. A strictly chronological analysis is appropriate as the sequence and timing of events is critical for discernment of the initiative's origins, the founding motives and the delicately balanced nature of Newman's pledged cooperation. It is precisely at this juncture that the merits and deficiencies of the two systems of education were discussed: initially among the promoters; later, in a wider forum. Analysis of events reveals how the school's characteristics emerged and who was responsible for them.

The identity of the nascent school emerges in a chapter on its first three-and-a-half years. The joint jurisdiction of headmaster and dame under a president is examined in the light of difficulties encountered and pressures brought to bear by masters and parents. From these lobbies can be traced the mounting tensions that erupted in the Darnell affair. Its importance and the availability of over 300 documents relating to it establish it as a case study that merits another chapter. While Chapter IV examines the causes of the crisis, Chapter V considers its settlement and ramifications. The sources reveal the manner in which the school was rescued and thereby identify where control lay. Feedback from the parental body discloses competing visions of a Catholic public school and the extent to which the affair divided opinion in Catholic circles. Newman's reaction to advice from parents and friends, particularly Hope-Scott, provides the necessary clues for assessing the extent to which the crisis changed the school.

Information from a wide range of sources is processed thematically in Chapter VI to assemble a picture of the Oratory School and to identify Newman's practical contribution to the development of education. The picture invites comparison with others: the original plan of the school founders; the conventional Protestant public-school model; and the Catholic colleges. The following chapter addresses a fundamental question: why it failed to live up to its billing as the Catholic Eton. The school's vulnerability is examined in three respects: against the unresolved 'university question'; in the context of suspicion of and hostility to Newman; and amidst intense competition. An overview of the development of Catholic educational provision for the upper classes in the period 1859–72

enables judgement to be passed on the school's influence. Petre's rival foundation, with its own version of a liberal education, highlights the deficiencies in the system two decades after Newman's foundation.

In the final chapter the process of testing the major theses, summarised in the review of secondary literature, is completed. The extensive spadework carried out in earlier chapters provides the evidence to either refute, modify or develop the claims advanced — about the school, Newman, the converts, the entire Catholic body. The contributions to knowledge arising from this thesis are also considered: in assessing the worth of the foundation in both the English and Catholic domains; in evaluating the influence of Oxford Movement converts on the Catholic Church in England; in adding to what is known about Newman; and in discerning novel approaches to perennial educational issues.

CHAPTER II BACKGROUND TO THE FOUNDATION

This chapter provides a framework of lesser known but essential background information for conducting the four-fold analysis of this thesis: of a particular foundation, of the effect of 'new blood' in a credal body, of a great nineteenth-century figure and of recurrent educational problems. A summary of the development of public schools in the nineteenth century is unnecessary as the subject has been thoroughly documented elsewhere.¹ Reference to this body of knowledge will be made as required. There is by contrast a dearth of equivalent research on Catholic educational provision for the higher social classes. Histories of the individual establishments do exist, but they tend to be inward-looking and aimed at ex-alumni rather than addressing the concerns of the historian. The sole attempt at an overview, by Barnes, is itself a collection of nine separate school histories. The first half of this chapter is designed to fill this vacuum.

In analysing a foundation that sought to merge two educational traditions it is worth noting how distinct they were. In the histories of each there is scant reference to the existence of the other. Chichester's *Schools*, written in 1882, is an exception. Setting out to undo the popular notion of the superiority of Protestant public schools, it begins by stressing the separateness of the two systems: the Catholic characterised by "ceaseless surveillance"; the Protestant by "a deliberate abandonment" of boys outside lesson and study time. The former was conducive of a "paternal system of government"; the latter led to antagonism between masters and boys, and rule by "boy public opinion" (unless, exceptionally, one such as Arnold of Rugby was present). He concludes that "between the paternal solicitude of Stonyhurst and the total abandonment of Eton there is no advantageous mean" — a claim that effectively dismisses the possibility of a Catholic public school. His comparisons rely on two very different types of evidence: a first-hand knowledge of one system through his own schooling and visits to eight establishments, and familiarity with the other through two renowned schoolboy stories — *Eric: or, little by*

1. For a useful discussion of the definition of the term 'public school' in this period see C. Shrosbree's *Public schools and private education: the Clarendon Commission 1861-64 and the Public Schools Act* (Manchester, 1988, pp.12-14), though he does not include the further twist given to the label by Catholic usage.

little and *Tom Brown's schooldays*² — supplemented by evidence from the reports of the Clarendon and Taunton Commissions³ — mostly the former, and mainly about Eton. He argues that the latter illustrate the consequences of a system "choke-full of false principles".⁴

Re-emergence from recusancy: English Catholics and their educational system

In the mid-nineteenth century the Catholic body in England was broadly composed of three social groupings: the old Catholics, the remnant of those who had survived penal times, dominated by a titled aristocracy; the Irish Catholics, living in urban poverty; and the converts issuing from the Oxford Movement, most of whom were highly educated and cultured.⁵ The Oratory School was born into this disparate body — disjointed on account of its uneven growth.⁶ The process of emancipation of Catholics, in which the converts were to participate, was slow. It was during the eighteenth century that, as the application of penal laws was gradually relaxed, Catholics began to emerge from a sub-society whose civil freedoms had been severely curtailed. The first Catholic Relief Act of 1778 enabled Catholics to purchase and inherit land legally. In 1791 Catholics were permitted to worship publicly and to set up credal schools, provided they were not seminaries or

2. F.W. Farrar's *Eric: or, little by little* was published in 1858 and T. Hughes's *Tom Brown's schooldays* the previous year.

3. The report of the Clarendon Commission (British Parliamentary Papers, 1864, XX, 4 vols, *Report of Her Majesty's Commissioners appointed to inquire into the revenues and management of certain colleges and schools, and the studies pursued and instruction given therein*) on the nine great schools — Eton, Winchester, Westminster, Charterhouse, St Paul's, Merchant Taylors', Harrow, Rugby and Shrewsbury — is used as an important primary source in this thesis. It will be referred to as the Clarendon Report. The report of the Taunton Commission (British Parliamentary Papers, 1867-68, XXVIII, 21 vols, *Report of the Commissioners appointed by Her Majesty to inquire into the education given in schools in England, not comprised within Her Majesty's two recent commissions on popular education and on public schools*) will likewise be used, and referred to as the Taunton Report.

4. C.R. Chichester, *Schools*, London, 1882, pp.iii-v, 15, 17, 32, 35-6, 38 & 80

5. McClelland, *English Roman Catholics and higher education*, preface

6. Between 1770 and 1850 the number of Catholics in England and Wales rose tenfold to about 600,000, of whom 25,000 were old Catholics. In the decade after the 1841 potato famine about half a million Irish Catholics poured into England. The number of prominent converts in the period 1840-70 was about 1500. Besides the starving Irish and the sophisticated converts, there were over 12,000 French émigrés, Catholic exiles — mainly upper-class laity or clergy — who fled across the English Channel after the French Revolution. Most returned after 1802. By 1850 Catholics formed 3.5 per cent of the population. 80 per cent were Irish and working-class. (E. Norman, *The English Catholic Church in the nineteenth century*, Oxford, 1984, pp.6-7 & 22)

schools run by religious orders.⁷ In 1829 the Act of Catholic Emancipation made wide-ranging concessions: it granted the exercise of all civil rights and opened up most positions under the Crown. Religious tests at Oxford and Cambridge were abolished in 1871.

Until the Restoration of the Catholic Hierarchy in 1850, the Vicars Apostolic exercised what ecclesiastical control they could in their Districts; four from 1588, and eight from 1840. Technically the Church in England was mission territory until 1908, coming under the Sacred Congregation Propaganda Fide, and thus the ordinary prescriptions of canon law did not fully apply. These anomalous conditions, in which irregular ecclesiastical arrangements were common, affected the foundation of the Oratory School. There were many disputes between English Catholic leaders in the nineteenth century. Coming directly under papal authority meant that they were frequently resolved in Rome, as in the affair involving the school in 1867. Tensions arose within the Catholic body on account of its rapid growth and its need of reorganisation, as well as its lack of homogeneity. At the centre of most disputes, according to Edward Norman, lay the differences between the higher clergy of the 'Roman' or Ultramontane party and an influential section of old Catholics.⁸ The struggle, which surfaced in the 1780s, was the inevitable product of an abnormal regime that had lasted for 250 years. As it had important repercussions on the school's fortunes it requires further explanation.

The characteristics of the old Catholics at the end of the eighteenth century reflected their recusant past. They were a withdrawn and closely-knit social unit with strong agricultural ties. Constant inter-marriage had reinforced their outdated ways and attitudes. They had adopted a style of life that helped them lie low — their devotions were plain and subdued, and they refrained from engaging in dialogue with Protestants. They

7. In 1563 all teachers were forced to take an oath before receiving a licence to teach in order to ensure they recognised the supremacy of the Queen in church matters. In 1700 the Government imposed a penalty of perpetual imprisonment on "every Papist keeping school, educating or boarding youth for that purpose". (W.H.G. Armytage, *Four hundred years of English education*, Cambridge, 1964; 1970, pp.2 & 41) The legislation with respect to schools in 1791 was unclear. The penalties for Catholic tutors or schoolmasters were abolished, provided their school was registered, yet it remained unlawful "to found, endow or establish any School, Academy, or College by persons professing the Roman Catholic religion". (B. Ward, *The dawn of the Catholic revival in England, 1781-1803* I, London, 1909, p.311)

8. Norman, *op. cit.*, pp.2-3, 26 & 72-3

had suffered severe disabilities because of their loyalty to the Church, yet, despite the financial penalties incurred, there was still a sizeable traditional landed group which included some families of considerable wealth, such as the Norfolks, Petres and Welds. (By contrast, the number of middle-class Catholics was relatively low.) The loyalty of these wealthy families had been invaluable for the continuance of the Faith. Almost every chapel was either the property of the laymen who had built it or of a committee of trustees. Most priests were attached to the private chapels of the gentry or the churches on their landed property, appointed and provided with stipends by the laity. Once relief measures were enacted, lay patronage, an unavoidable legacy of penal times, was rendered inappropriate. In the process of gaining control, the Vicars Apostolic met with strong opposition, as some laymen were reluctant to cede power. They had so long been accustomed to directing the external affairs of the Church that it had given them the impression of a right. By the 1840s the tide had turned; in 1850 lay patronage was swept away.⁹

While a major concern of the higher clergy was the re-establishment of ecclesiastical order and the re-imposition of due clerical control, lay leaders were more preoccupied with gaining civil concessions. In their eagerness to convince an intensely prejudiced public that Catholics could be as loyal as they — neither Jacobites, nor slaves of superstition, nor compromised by a ‘double allegiance’ — many tended to minimise the Church’s dogmatic authority and teaching, to disavow foreign influence, and to maximise civil obedience. They were all too willing to accept compromise with the State to gain relief. The Catholic Committee (1782–92) and its successor, the Cisalpine Club (1792–1830), composed of leading old Catholics and representing their views, articulated these Gallican tendencies. They worked independently from the clergy and the Irish in pressing Catholic claims before the Government.¹⁰

In the 1780s there was a long and acrimonious dispute between the bishops and the lay leaders of the Catholic Committee which concerned the authority to act on behalf of the Catholic body. Harboursing suspicions that the bishops took a narrow view of the

9. *Ibid.*, pp.4–9 & 75–8 and Ward, *Dawn of the Catholic revival* I, p.88

10. Norman, *op. cit.*, pp.48–50

Catholic position, the Committee tried to negotiate relief measures without their participation. They secured draft legislation that provided relief measures for ‘protesting Catholics dissenters’ — those willing to take an oath — which were to be denied to ‘papists’ — those who refused. The bishops twice condemned the oath which they had not authorised.¹¹ They used the influential layman Weld to thwart the scheme which would have wreaked untold havoc.¹² The episode helped create in ecclesiastical circles a climate of extreme caution, if not suspicion, towards lay initiatives. A clash of interests was bound to occur later in the domain of education, where claims for influence of clergy and laity overlapped.

Collegiate education for English Catholics

A description of the Catholic collegiate system of education is required to address key questions about the founding of the school in the next chapter. The peculiar characteristics of the system can only be appreciated by understanding its troubled past. The historical background also reveals the pressures at work for influence in education against which the school’s founders would have to contend.

The considerable cultural gap between old Catholics and their Protestant counterparts resulted from restricted educational possibilities. Until the 1791 Relief Act parents were forbidden to send their children to Catholic colleges,¹³ even abroad. Some of the colleges established abroad for Englishmen served the double purpose of educating church boys or postulants and the sons of the Catholic gentry.¹⁴ Each had its clientele of

11. They argued that it entailed a usurpation of the episcopal prerogative to determine the lawfulness of oaths with doctrinal content.

12. Ward, *Dawn of the Catholic revival* I, pp.87 & 240–1 and P. Hughes, *The Catholic question, 1688–1829*, London, 1929, pp.157–64

13. The distinction between ‘college’ and ‘school’ can be made in two ways. Beales uses ‘college’ to denote an establishment where priests or religious are trained, and ‘school’ where lay boys were educated with church boys or postulants. It is more appropriate to the context of the nineteenth century to use, like B. Ward and Newman himself, ‘college’ for institutions attached to religious communities or seminaries, and ‘school’ for those without such links.

14. They were the Jesuit college at St Omer, later at Bruges then Liège, the Benedictine colleges at Douai and Dieulouard, a Dominican college at Bornhem, and the English College at Douai for the secular clergy. St Omer was the oldest and most popular college. After the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1762 it became a secular college at Bruges. It continued in Liège despite the repression of the Jesuits in 1773. St Gregory’s, Douai began accepting sons of the gentry wanting a liberal education in about 1608 and became a

families in England. Their characteristics reflected growth in a Catholic, continental tradition from which England had split after the Reformation.¹⁵ While generally content with the teaching of Classics, the gentry subscribing to the colleges showed dissatisfaction with preparation for life in the world of work.¹⁶ Among the dozens of shortlived, precarious schools on English soil, two of note emerged — Sedgley Park and Standon Lordship (absorbed into Old Hall Academy in 1769)¹⁷ — which functioned as preparatory boarding schools for the colleges overseas.

Initially the Catholic Committee sought changes in the studies at the colleges abroad. Later, they proposed the establishment of a school in England "for those who are destined for civil or commercial life", as those abroad were inappropriate for this purpose.¹⁸ A circular, intended to gather support, suggested the addition of modern languages to the core Classical curriculum and higher prominence for mathematics, particularly in its applications to business.¹⁹ The proposal was viewed with apprehension by most of the clergy and many of the gentry, and as a threat to the colleges abroad by those with strong ties of loyalty to them.²⁰ Opposition forced the Committee to drop its plans. Representatives of all the leading Catholic families in the north of England signed an address which declared they were unconvinced of any supposed deficiency in the existing system. The colleges abroad had accommodated the wishes of the laity by giving

predominantly lay college. St Lawrence's, Dieulouard accepted lay boys from 1669. The Dominican novitiate added lay pupils to its postulants in 1660. (A.C.F. Beales, *Education under penalty: English Catholic education from the Reformation to the fall of James II, 1547-1689*, London, 1963, pp.158-84 & 273-4) Lay pupils formed a minority at the English College, Douai — 20 or 30 out of 100. (Ward, *Dawn of the Catholic revival I*, p.59) For those training for the secular priesthood there were English Colleges at Paris, Rome, Madrid, Valladolid, Seville and Lisbon.

15. The English Colleges were affected by rules for seminaries laid down at the Council of Trent (1545-63).

16. Butler complained of the lack of preparation "either for business, the learned professions, or the higher scenes of life". Little attention was paid to manners. (C. Butler, *Reminiscences*, London, 1822, p.5)

17. They were both founded by Bishop Challoner. Sedgley Park began in 1763 and numbers rose to about 100. Standon Lordship started in 1752 and succeeded a school begun at Twyford in 1685. Numbers were limited to 25 but many of the leading old Catholic names featured in its list of pupils.

18. Address of the Catholic Committee to the English Catholics, 10 Apr 1787, Ward, *Dawn of the Catholic revival II*, pp.260-5

19. Address of the School Committee to English Catholics, May 1787, Ward, *Dawn of the Catholic revival I*, pp.116-17

20. Even J. Talbot, the bishop closest to the Committee, expressed reservations. He urged that "ye religious part be not forgot, as too often happens when ye laity set about ye work", and suggested they consider adapting Old Hall or Sedgley Park to their needs. (*Ibid.*, p.118)

greater prominence to "Accounts and Writing and the English and French languages". The scheme would cause a fall in numbers for the priesthood and precipitate the demise of the colleges. If the colleges closed, all would be jeopardised if, in England, religious toleration worsened and the proposed new school was also forced to close. Furthermore,

the students in our foreign Colleges are placed at a distance from objects of dissipation and bad example, so much complained of in the public schools of this country, and we deem it a matter of extreme difficulty to guard against this objection in any extensive plan of education proposed to be set on foot in England.²¹

This conviction was as firmly held 70 years later.

Fundamental changes were forced by external events six years later: the confiscation of property, the expulsion of pupils and the imprisonment of priests from the colleges in France. The abandonment of the colleges and the resettlement of pupils and teachers in England provided the opportunity for wholesale change to the Catholic system of education. Within three years a new order was established which was to remain unchallenged until the arrival of the converts half a century later. This brief foundational period witnessed intense rivalry — between the Vicars Apostolic themselves; and between them, the religious orders and the old Catholic laity — in the struggle for influence and control in education. The divisions lasted throughout the next century and rendered futile the possibility of any coordinated policy in education.

Amidst the many schemes and counter schemes proposed, the views of Milner, the future bishop of the Midland District, merit attention. He argued against the coexistence of a school and seminary in the same college, and for the establishment of a good grammar school.²² He recommended that "a different kind of discipline, of education and of superiors is requisite for that College where our young men of family are to be instructed, and that Seminary where our priests are to be formed". In urging a plan that was suitable to the gentry, he hoped to prevent a Cisalpine school "doing irreparable mischief".²³ He also warned that "unless a good classical school was established, with masters of first-rate talents", the religious orders "will have three parts in four of the

21. Letter addressed to the Committee of English Catholics, autumn 1787, *ibid.*, pp.119–21

22. Milner to Douglass, 27 Oct 1793, *ibid.* II, pp.97–8

23. Milner to Douglass, 14 Feb 1784, *ibid.*, p.102

Gentry to educate" — a prediction that proved to be remarkably accurate. His scheme for "the first Catholic School in the kingdom" effectively entailed the separation of church and lay boys.²⁴

The Cisalpine Club sought to establish a school for the laity. They wanted a Catholic public school, with a governing body composed entirely of Catholic noblemen and gentlemen who would appoint two priests, as headmaster and assistant, to run it. Meanwhile, the Northern and Southern Districts were planning a single secular college. In the Midland District, Bishop T. Talbot was trying to establish a college for his church students but the man he selected as head was the very man the Cisalpines wanted. The absence of a suitable alternative provoked a compromise: Oscott College was established in 1794 for church and lay boys under joint management. The plan for a single secular college was abandoned. In the event, given £10,000 to found a college, Bishop Douglass pressed ahead with the absorption of pupils and staff from Douai and St Omer into Old Hall Academy, renamed St Edmund's. A similar college, called St Cuthbert's, was founded in 1794 at Crook Hall in the north, and moved to Ushaw in 1808. It derived purely from Douai and, like Oscott and St Edmund's, inherited its characteristics including the old rules.²⁵

Circumstances had led to Milner's plea for the separation of church and lay boys being disregarded, together with his lesser request for the separation of boys and students of philosophy and theology. The custom of educating lay and ecclesiastical pupils together, which had arisen out of necessity in the overseas colleges, was perpetuated.²⁶ (An element of necessity remained in view of the serious doubt as to whether public opinion would tolerate the establishment of a pure seminary.) At the secular colleges it was reinforced by financial convenience: fees for lay boys supported the church boys; and

24. Milner to Douglass, 30 Mar 1785, *ibid.*, p.106

25. *Ibid.*, pp.54–5 & 95–114; Barnes, *op. cit.*, pp.109–15, 127–31 & 142–4; Upton, *op. cit.*, pp.26–9

26. Barnes makes a virtue of this necessity. He claims that ancient customs were exported from Winchester and New College, Oxford to Douai, and eventually imported to St Edmund's, Ware. He justifies the mixing of church and lay boys by claiming that those intended for the priesthood were like the scholars at Eton and Winchester, in clerical dress, while the lay boys were like the commoners or oppidans who lived outside. (Barnes, *op. cit.*, pp.121–2)

students in theology were employed to act as teachers and Prefects²⁷ superintending the boys in dormitories, chapel or during recreation. What the arrangement gained in financial terms it lost in appropriateness of education. The element of compromise entailed in the system of 'shared' education primarily affected the lay pupils. In the 1850s the studies, rules, discipline and pious practices at the secular colleges were essentially those of Douai, that is, an ecclesiastical college.²⁸ Moreover, the inherited characteristics of the overseas colleges inevitably perpetuated foreign customs and a continental bias in studies.

The Jesuits began a college with exiles from Liège in 1794 at Stonyhurst Hall, property given them by Weld, an old boy from their college at Bruges. It used the *ratio studiorum*, the Jesuit scheme of studies,²⁹ and Prefects were entrusted with the task of keeping the boys under their eyes at all times, as well as administering punishments. The system of 'surveillance' applied to the playground, the chapel, wash-rooms and above all to the dormitories, where a Prefect remained on duty all night.³⁰ The Benedictine exiles took longer to establish themselves. Those from St Gregory's, Douai settled initially at Acton Burnell on property lent by an old boy, moving to Downside in 1813. Those from St Lawrence's, Dieulouard finally settled at Ampleforth in 1806.

27. The term 'Prefect' will be used to denote a staff-prefect or usher, while 'prefect' will be reserved for the modern usage of boy-prefect or monitor.

28. Studies concentrated on the ancient languages, together with French and Italian, with elements of physical science and mathematics. Spiritual exercises included daily prayer, Mass, two visits to the Blessed Sacrament after meals, spiritual reading (while meals were taken in silence), the Rosary and night prayers, as well as frequent Confession and Benedictions. The Third Westminster Synod of 1859 recorded that the system of education approximated to that prescribed for purely ecclesiastical colleges or seminaries, and that if the lay boys were removed little change would result. (*The Synods in English: being the text of the four Synods of Westminster*, ed. R.E. Guy, Stratford-on-Avon, 1886, pp.227-8)

29. The *ratio studiorum* was first issued in 1586. It gave comprehensive instructions for Jesuit colleges and schools: choice of text books, arrangements for the arts courses, advice on how to stimulate students, rules to be followed in classes and exams, and when and how to distribute prizes and awards. Its influence was felt in non-Jesuits schools, including Douai. (M. Williams, 'The English Catholic educational diaspora in Europe from the 1560s to the French Revolution', *Aspects of Education* XLVII, Hull, 1992, p.11) Another description is given in H. Chadwick's, *St Omer to Stonyhurst: a history of two centuries* (London, 1962, pp.69-72). Timetables from the *ratio studiorum* can be found in T.E. Muir, *Stonyhurst College 1593-1993*, London, 1992, pp.156-7.

30. Opponents of the system called it 'espionage' (though others use the term espionage in a neutral sense, e.g. G. Gruggen & J. Keating, *Stonyhurst: its past history and life in the present*, London, 1901, p.226). A full, though critical, description of the Jesuit system in the late 1850s is given in W.J. Petre, *Catholic systems of school discipline*, London, 1878, pp.7-41. From June 1857 Petre spent over a year at the Jesuit prep school Hodder before another two years in the 'lower line' at Stonyhurst. He returned after six years to spend a year and a half as a 'philosopher'. The Stonyhurst "disciplinary system [...] so unremittingly maintained at all hours" is described in the Taunton Report. (I, pp.321-2; V, pp.328 & 332; IX, p.584)

One manifestation of the strong rivalry between the new foundations was the desire for grand buildings, a surprising common characteristic given the poverty of material resources among Catholics, the uncertainty over legal protection of endowments, and the loss of all property and goods on leaving foreign shores.³¹ It caused Newman to remark upon the Catholic tendency to lay money out on "*showy works*".³² Consolidation in bricks and mortar gave a new permanence to the young foundations. Pretensions to emulation of the medieval foundations of Oxford and Cambridge were contained in prospectuses and reflected in the architecture.³³

The loyalty of old boys to their *alma mater* facilitated the re-founding of the colleges and confirmed their growth in numbers as well as bequests. The pre-eminence of St Omer among the overseas colleges, in tradition, organisation and size, gave the Jesuits an early advantage. In 1815 Stonyhurst was given more land by Weld for a junior school. By then it had grown to 214 boys plus older students. After its flying start, numbers had fallen to 120 by 1829. McClelland attributes the drop to increased competition, dislike among the aristocracy for Jesuit discipline and adherence to the class-master system.³⁴ Beginning without a traditional clientele, Oscott's progress was slower. Due to low numbers and mounting debts, the lay governors decided to retire from the management and, in 1808, handed the college to Bishop Milner. At the time it had seven church and 40 lay boys. During Wiseman's³⁵ presidency (1840–47) Oscott began to

31. Compensation for the seizure of college property and assets amounted to about £120,000. It was eventually paid by the French Government to a British Government which, in 1826, declined to return it and instead spent it on building Brighton Pavilion. (Norman, *op. cit.*, p.178)

32. Newman to J.M. Capes, 7 Dec 1848, *L&D* XII, p.366

33. Fine new buildings costing £12,000 were opened at St Edmund's in 1799, to which a Pugin chapel was added in 1853. In 1808 St Cuthbert's moved to new buildings, grander than those of St Edmund's. A later series of magnificent buildings on a collegiate plan featured an exhibition room, a museum and a Pugin chapel imitating that of University College, Oxford. Oscott moved to a new site in 1838 with buildings erected on the plan of Wadham College, Oxford, featuring a Pugin quadrangle. Stonyhurst's chapel imitated that of King's College, Cambridge. The fine manor house at Downside had 66 acres. The pre-Pugin buildings, opened in 1823, were so fine they were commented on in Parliament. Pugin additions arrived in 1854. The period 1811–25 was one of great building activity at Ampleforth.

34. This involved a class being taught by the same master as it moved up from Elements or Figures to Rhetoric. (McClelland, *English Roman Catholics and higher education*, p.30)

35. Nicolas Wiseman (1802–65) was born in Seville. His family returned to Waterford where he went to the local boarding school. In 1810 he transferred to Ushaw. Eight years later he was one of the first group to study at the English College, Rome, where he remained for 22 years. He was ordained in 1826 and became Rector of the College in 1828.

establish itself as the preferred college for the Catholic upper classes. His aspiration for a Catholic Eton led to extensive concessions to high tastes. The drawback was that conditions to the liking of the upper classes were ill-suited for the education of ecclesiastical students.

Of the other foundations before the Oratory School, only one succeeded in breaking into the circle of colleges supplying the needs of the upper classes. Unable to force Downside to become a secular college for the Western District, Bishop Baines founded Prior Park, near Bath, in 1830. While at Ampleforth, numbers under him had risen from 20 to 80. However, he took 30 of Ampleforth's best boys for his grand scheme. Baines set up two colleges in one — St Peter's for boys and St Paul's for students — on either side of a splendid mansion set in 187 acres. A projected Catholic university on the same site never materialised. On Baines's death in 1843 there were debts of £40,000, while his establishment was only half full. It was closed in 1856.³⁶

The strengths of the collegiate system were the very cause of some of its shortcomings. Above all, security in religion was purchased at the expense of due preparation for life in the world. Such structural flaws suggest why a radically new foundation was attempted. This background description reveals the difficulty of the enterprise embarked upon by those challenging a system characterised by intense competitiveness, dependency on traditional family loyalties, and the proclamation of permanence and status through grandiose architecture. It is easy to see why the laity acquiesced in a system under clerical and religious control. The difficulties in setting up a lay school were too formidable: the problem of guaranteeing religious character; financial handicaps in competing with a system using student-teachers; and the tarnished reputation of lay action due to a history of misguided efforts. Furthermore, any challenge to the collegiate system could be perceived as a threat to the establishments nurturing those aspiring to ecclesiastical or religious life, and hence a danger to ecclesial life as a whole.

Unless indicated to the contrary, biographical footnotes are culled from Newman's *Letters and diaries*, and supplemented from the *Dictionary of national biography*.

36. In 1847 12 of the 40 places at St Paul's and 59 out of 100 places at St Peter's were occupied. (J. Cashman, 'Old Prior Park: the final years, 1843-1856', *Recusant History* XXIII, 1996, pp.79 & 83)

Higher education for English Catholics

The founders of the Oratory School had a conception of education that embraced the university. It marked the school off from the colleges and made it particularly vulnerable in the absence of suitable higher education for Catholics. (This important aspect will be developed at length in Chapter VII.) In the absence of university education, the Catholic colleges attempted to retain lay boys for higher studies by allowing them to follow the first two years of seminary training, the philosophy course. Stonyhurst led the way but few parents were able to afford what amounted to an aristocratic finishing school.³⁷ The ‘university question’ — the absence of a university in England that Catholics could safely attend — vexed Catholics for much of the nineteenth century. Numerous attempts were made to solve the problem, both by individuals and the hierarchy. These either fell short of providing a satisfactory answer or else came to grief. Before the universities were opened up to Catholics, the question had been one of expediency; how best to cater for the small number in pursuit of a suitable higher education. As barriers preventing Catholics attending were removed, the question of ‘mixed’ education became more troublesome: under what conditions was it permissible for Catholics to attend institutions of higher education that were either Protestant or non-denominational?³⁸

When Wiseman returned from Rome in 1835 he was eager to found a Catholic university, and had the promise of a papal charter for one. He visited Baines in 1835 to discuss the plan, but it proceeded no further on account of fundamental disagreements.³⁹ Wiseman envisaged the university as a centre of Catholic learning, culture and research, whereas Baines’s scheme went little beyond a seminary. When Wiseman became President of Oscott, he entertained hopes that Oscott itself might evolve into a university.

Higher study at the colleges was not the solution. Until they could get degrees there could be no proper admission of Catholics into the professions. This was a source

37. The story of the Stonyhurst philosophers is documented in Sire’s *Gentlemen philosophers: Catholic higher studies at Liège and Stonyhurst College, 1774–1916*.

38. English Catholics began attending the Anglican Trinity College, Dublin in 1793. Stonyhurst prepared boys specially for it. (McClelland, *English Roman Catholics and higher education*, pp.21–2)

39. W. Ward, *The life and times of Cardinal Wiseman I*, London, 1897, p.124

of frustration to the gentry once career prospects opened up in 1829. A limited solution was provided when the University of London gained its charter enabling it to act as an examining body for teaching institutions that wished to affiliate. Among the first wave of institutions to adopt the solution in 1840 were six Catholic colleges: Downside, Oscott, Prior Park, St Edmund's, Stonyhurst and Ushaw.⁴⁰ The exams provided a welcome stimulus and led to substantial reorganisation as studies were realigned to coincide with the Matriculation and BA syllabuses. A wide range of subjects were examined in the Matriculation exam, not just Classics. At Stonyhurst specialist teachers were appointed, but six years later it reverted to the class-master system. Reforms at Ushaw were more extensive. In came a tutor system, prizes, academic specialists, new books and new courses; out went the old nomenclature, flogging and the class-master system. Two years later, a revolt by students at the abandonment of Douai traditions reversed most of the changes.⁴¹

A feature of the London University exams was that they were essentially non-Classical and non-literary. The dearth of names of the Catholic aristocracy on the degree lists indicates how unattractive the option was for them. Oscott, the college with the greatest proportion of upper-class boys, had the least contact with London. Instead many boys passed directly into the army, navy or law. For this reason the colleges were ambivalent about the exams. There was also a reticence to disrupt the established pattern of studies. The aim of preparing for a factual exam covering many disciplines was considered incompatible with a deep study of the Classical languages. The greater specialisation in the final BA exam and, after 1859, the Intermediate exam suited them better.

Catalyst for change: the activity of the converts

Educational opinions were challenged by the addition to the Catholic body of highly educated converts, a majority of whom had passed through the public schools and Oxford

40. F.M.G. Willson, *Our Minerva: the men and politics of the University of London, 1836-1858*, London, 1995, appendix II

41. McClelland, *English Roman Catholics and higher education*, pp.34-8 & 48-52

or Cambridge.⁴² They brought fresh light to old problems, but change was not to come easily. In opening up Catholic educational practice to public debate and scrutiny, tensions were created which were to have a direct bearing on the school. For a while relations between old Catholics and converts were strained. Norman describes the antipathy between them as "one of the leading features of English Catholicism in the nineteenth century". Distrust of the converts stemmed from an inability of some old Catholics to comprehend the genuineness of the conversions. Jealousy and resentment were felt by those who had borne the heat of the day at the favours and attention bestowed on converts by church leaders such as Wiseman. Matters were exacerbated by exaggerated claims that their arrival heralded England's reconversion. Catholic journals were suspicious and sometimes openly hostile.⁴³ The new Roman spirit of Italianate customs and practices that was ushered in by the restored hierarchy contributed to the heightening of tensions, as it was perceived that the converts were of the Roman party.

Relationships were not improved by the dismissiveness of converts for the educational and cultural achievements of old Catholics. Views were articulated in the *Rambler*, a journal founded in 1848 by Capes,⁴⁴ which was essentially the organ of lay Oxford converts. Like other recent converts, Capes soon experienced the cultural limitations of Catholics and their isolation from intellectual and public life in England. He hoped the *Rambler* "would serve to raise the level of culture of the English Catholics and, by removing the reproach of intellectual backwardness, to enable them to exert their

42. E.G.K. Browne's *History of the Tractarian Movement* (Dublin, 1856) gives an annual breakdown of the "principal converts" between 1842 and 1856. During these 15 years 220 came from the clergy and 360 from the laity (with equal numbers of men and women). *Rome's recruits, a list of Protestants who have become Catholics since the Tractarian Movement* (London, 1878) is a re-print of lists in the *Whitehall Review*. The statistics were also published in the *Tablet* (9 Nov 1878). It supplied 1640 names among whom were 12 peers, 23 peeresses and 333 clergymen; 266 were educated at Oxford and 128 at Cambridge. W.G. Gorman's *Converts to Rome* (London, 1910), a list of prominent converts after the Oxford Movement, provides (pp.xiii-xv) a breakdown of professions and status: 572 clergymen; 29 peers and 53 peeresses, 432 members of the nobility and 42 baronets; 92 from the medical and 192 from the legal professions; 306 army and 64 naval officers; 39 from the diplomatic service; and 470 authors, poets and journalists. Of these 586 were educated at Oxford and 346 at Cambridge.

43. Norman, *op. cit.*, pp.150 & 211

44. John Moore Capes (1812-89) was educated at Westminster School and Balliol College, Oxford. He took Anglican orders and received the living at Bridgwater. Although he opposed the Tractarians and wrote against Newman, he later stayed with him at Littlemore before being received into the Church in July 1845. He was followed by his wife, his brother Frederick and many parishioners. He drifted away from the Church, rejoined the Church of England in 1870 but became a Catholic again in 1882. He wrote several novels and an opera.

influence on other Englishmen". In particular he wished to see educational standards at the colleges raised, with greater financial support from the laity.⁴⁵ In their zeal to remedy the evident shortcomings, the converts frequently provoked cradle Catholics to resentment by insensitivity and a lack of inhibition that reflected their different educational background, with its greater emphasis on critical analysis and open debate.

Most converts thought the Catholic laity were less well educated than their Protestant counterparts. Capes blamed the system of shared education, the "practical jumble of the secular and ecclesiastical systems" which had arisen through historical accidents and had left Catholics in the mid-nineteenth century "without the establishment of a single purely ecclesiastical, or purely secular, seminary in Great Britain". He suggested its eradication as the first step in reform. (His criticisms were based on personal knowledge of Prior Park where he had taught mathematics.) Teaching suffered on three counts: "the want of a race of competent professors and teachers; the want of funds to support such instructors, if they existed; and the wretched apathy of the Catholic laity on the subject of education".⁴⁶

Old Catholics must have reacted with mixed feelings to the public airing of the shortcomings of educational provision. They may have taken heart at the prospect of reform but the incisive criticisms of the colleges were at least painful, if not impertinent and scornful. Besides protesting strongly on behalf of collegiate education, one bishop reacted by objecting to public discussion of matters such as education "which depend entirely on Church authority".⁴⁷ Capes replied that the inferiority of Catholic education was an indisputable fact attested to by the absence of English Catholics in almost every field of learning. He blamed "the wealthy laity" for throwing away money on buildings instead of the two most important educational needs: provision for teachers, and scholarships for students. He calculated that the money lavished on buildings would have been sufficient to endow at least two Catholic colleges on the scale of Oxford or

45. Altholz, *op. cit.*, p.9

46. 'Catholic and Protestant collegiate education', *Rambler*, Dec 1848, pp.236 & 238

47. Ullathorne to the editor, *Tablet*, 9 Dec 1848, quoted in E.C. Butler, *The life and times of Bishop Ullathorne, 1806-1889* I, London, 1926, p.159

Cambridge.⁴⁸ Oakeley,⁴⁹ a convert studying for the priesthood at St Edmund's, supplied a crucial insight to the debate. He pointed out that

The difference between the existing English Catholic idea of education and that to which we [converts] were accustomed at Oxford is [...] a fundamental one; the one making the formation of [mental] *character* its great aim, the other, the storing of the mind with a certain amount of valuable facts. Hence *our* requirements seem to Catholics 'limited' and *their* intellectual character and habits seem to us shallow and desultory.

He admitted that Catholic education was faulty in making "too little allowance for the distinctions of individual character, both moral and intellectual".⁵⁰

The two great intellectual converts supported Capes. Newman gave him private reassurance. While cautioning him to avoid the appearance of hostility to old Catholics, he admitted that it was not possible "to do good without giving offence and incurring criticism". His only criticism was that Capes had not "brought out *enough* that the stinginess of the laity is at the bottom of it".⁵¹ W.G. Ward⁵² publicly dismissed the notion of a convert conspiracy against old Catholics: the converts spoke, not from an external standpoint, but "precisely *because* we feel ourselves as fully part and parcel of the existing system" as old Catholics. It was an indubitable fact that "Protestant lay education is superior to ours". There was a lack of appropriate education and training for future leaders, for those entering professions or other intellectual occupations, and for those suited to teaching secular subjects at the colleges.⁵³

48. 'The duties of journalists: Catholic and Protestant education', *Rambler*, Jan 1849, p.330

49. Frederick Oakeley (1802–80), the youngest son of Sir Charles Oakeley, studied at Christ Church, Oxford. He took orders and became a Fellow and Chaplain of Balliol. With W.G. Ward he joined the Tractarians. After staying at Littlemore he was received into the Catholic Church in October 1845.

50. Oakeley to the editor, *Rambler*, Jan 1849, p.373. In comparing the two systems, one "more extended", the other "more exact or thorough", Newman thought Oakeley had missed the point. Newman considered it a question of which was the most effective method of education. (Newman to Capes, 3 Jan 1849, *L&D* XIII, pp.5–6)

51. Newman to Capes, 6 & 7 Dec 1848, *L&D* XII, pp.365–6 & 3 Jan 1849, *L&D* XIII, pp.5–6

52. William George Ward (1812–82) was one of the most extreme of the Tractarians. His *Ideal of the Christian Church* was condemned by the Oxford Convocation in 1845. He was stripped of his degrees, and resigned his fellowship at Balliol soon afterwards. He was received into the Catholic Church with his wife in 1845 and then taught philosophy and theology at St Edmund's. Ward was editor of the *Dublin Review* from 1863 to 1878, lending it a strong Ultramontane line. He once told his sub-editor, "You will find me narrow and strong — *very* narrow and *very* strong." (W. Ward, *William George Ward and the Catholic revival*, London, 1893, p.223)

53. W.G. Ward to the editor, *Rambler*, Feb 1849, pp.446 & 449

Ward maintained that the London exams contributed to the lack of real scholarship at the colleges. Capes and Newman thought that the arrangement barely constituted a university education, as it separated learning from religion.⁵⁴ Capes pinpointed the real weakness of collegiate higher education: the diversity of interests; the multiplication of resources; and the heterogeneous composition of the student body — middle-class, aristocratic and clerical. He suggested that the individual interests of the colleges be subordinated to the common good by the establishment of a single institution.⁵⁵

The Catholic University, Dublin

In 1845 Peel's Act established the secular Queen's Colleges to provide an alternative to Trinity College, Dublin where some religious tests were still in force. Rome forbade the Irish bishops to take part in the scheme of mixed education and urged them to establish a Catholic university on the model of Louvain, set up successfully by the Belgian bishops in 1834. In 1851 Archbishop Cullen, on behalf of the Irish episcopacy, invited Newman — "fitted beyond all others [...] to mould into shape, to govern, and give character to the future University" — to be the first Rector.⁵⁶

Fundamental differences of view between Newman and the Irish bishops, including Cullen, echoed those between Wiseman and Baines, and caused endless problems. Newman wanted the university to provide a general liberal education; the bishops wanted training for the professions. Newman wanted a collegiate structure, like Oxford (and

54. Newman's opposition to the separation of intellectual and moral education was wonderfully conveyed in a sermon: "It will not satisfy me, what satisfies so many, to have two independent systems, intellectual and religious, going at once side by side, by a sort of division of labour, and only accidentally brought together. It will not satisfy me, if religion is here, and science there, and young men converse with science all day, and lodge with religion in the evening. It is not touching the evil [...] if young men eat and drink and sleep in one place, and think in another: I want the same roof to contain both the intellectual and moral discipline. [...] I want the intellectual laymen to be religious, and the devout ecclesiastic to be intellectual. [...] Sanctity has its influence; intellect has its influence; the influence of sanctity is the greater on the long run; the influence of intellect is greater at the moment. Therefore, in the case of the young, [...] where the intellect is, *there* is the influence. Their literary, their scientific teachers, really have the forming of them." (Newman, 'Intellect, the instrument of religious training', *Sermons preached on various occasions*, London, 1857; 1898, pp.13–14)

55. McClelland, *English Roman Catholics and higher education*, pp.65–7

56. 'Report of the Commission of the Catholic University of Ireland to the Archbishop and Bishops of Ireland assembled in Council on the 18th May 1854' (McClelland, *English Roman Catholics and higher education*, p.98)

Louvain); the bishops opposed this and forced a compromise. Newman appointed men according to his vision, typically Oxford converts; the bishops wanted to have more priests and more Irishmen. Newman intended the university to be mainly a lay institution and wanted its finances to be in lay hands;⁵⁷ the bishops had in mind a type of lay seminary and would not relinquish financial control. Newman hoped to attract English Catholics in considerable numbers; the bishops intended it for Irishmen. Newman scandalised the bishops by having a cricket field laid out, and allowing smoking and hunting.⁵⁸

In 1857 Newman decided to resign the rectorship. Various considerations contributed to his decision besides the hindrances and frustrations he had experienced: the lack of English support for it, either financial or in students; the incompatibility of the rectorship with duties as Superior of the Birmingham Oratory, which needed his presence and guiding hand; and his conviction "that really I may be *wanted* in England".⁵⁹ While withdrawal from the university was interpreted by some as a failure on Newman's part, it gave him invaluable experience for future educational ventures: working with a hierarchy had provided him with crucial insights into the prevailing mentality of the higher clergy; contact with the Catholic laity had warned him of its apathy and reluctance to give financial support for educational endeavours.⁶⁰

Tensions within the Catholic body

The resolution of rival claims for ecclesiastical authority and intellectual freedom was one which particularly exercised Catholic minds in the nineteenth century. In England many converts, including Newman, became involved in the debate. Their association with the Oratory School had a profound effect on its fortunes. To appreciate this effect, as well as

57. Newman later reflected that the real reason for Cullen's opposition was Newman's desire "to make the laity a substantive power in the University". (Newman's memorandum: the Catholic University, Nov 1870 – May 1873, *John Henry Newman: autobiographical writings*, ed. H. Tristram, London, 1956, [henceforth abbreviated to *Autobiographical writings*] pp.327–8)

58. Norman, *op. cit.*, pp.322–5

59. Newman to St John, 7 May 1857, *L&D* XVIII, p.30

60. Newman thought that, as the university was "mainly for the good of the laity, the laity ought to be the formal movers in the matter", but neither the English nor Irish gentry expressed much interest in it. (Newman to Capes, 1 Feb 1857, *L&D* XVII, pp.512–13)

Altholz's claim that the school issued from the liberal Catholic movement, a brief summary of developments is called for. By 1857 the *Rambler* had become the organ of the liberal Catholic movement⁶¹ under the direction of Simpson⁶² and Acton⁶³. Simpson, intellectually pugnacious and with an instinct for sensitive subjects, enjoyed the role of troublemaker.⁶⁴ Acton was unique among his Catholic contemporaries in England. Although of old Catholic stock, his thoroughly cosmopolitan background enabled him to identify with the liberal Catholic converts. He decided to settle in England in 1857 with ambitious aspirations of raising the cultural and political thought of Catholics. Acton hoped that a concentration of the limited intellectual resources in the Catholic body would enable it to give Catholics an influence on national life. However, his antagonism to ecclesiastical authority was to place him outside the institutional Church.⁶⁵

A breach developed between Ultramontane and liberal Catholic tendencies which divided the converts and led to a confrontation between ecclesiastical authority and lay, liberal thought. It hinged upon the delicate balance between freedom and authority. It was aggravated by the process of centralisation that was taking place throughout the Church under Pius IX, and the clash of religious and secular ideas. To liberal Catholics the Ultramontane tendency denoted a Church in a "state of siege", in opposition to, and

61. Altholz defines this nineteenth-century movement as "an attempt to bridge the gap between the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church and the dominant secular principles of the age. [...] it was an intellectual liberalism, characterised by an emphasis upon the legitimacy and value of intellectual sources independent of the authority of the Church". (Altholz, *op. cit.*, p.1)

62. Richard Simpson (1820–76) studied at Oriel College, Oxford. He resigned the living of Mitcham to become a Catholic in 1846. He was an able linguist and a Shakespearean scholar with interests in philosophy, theology, history, literature and music.

63. John Dalberg Acton (1834–1902) was made 8th baronet in 1839 and created the first Baron Acton in 1869. He was related to cardinals, politicians and dukes, and moved between his house at Aldenham, Shropshire, his estate in Bavaria and his Neapolitan palace. Sometimes known as "the most erudite scholar of his age", he started his education at Oscott, then studied under Döllinger in Munich as a private pupil for six years. There he laid the foundations for his immense learning and developed his passionate devotion to liberty of conscience and religious toleration. Acton was MP for Carlow for the period 1859–64. He became the proprietor of the *Rambler* in 1858 and its editor after Newman in 1859. He changed it to the quarterly *Home and Foreign Review* in 1862 to avoid ecclesiastical censure but brought it to an end in 1864. He then worked for the weekly *Chronicle* and the *North British Review*. After working with Döllinger during the first Vatican Council he devoted himself to private study. Although he became the Regius Professor of Modern History in Cambridge in 1895 and the first editor of *Cambridge Modern History*, he never managed to publish the *magnum opus* he had worked on for so long.

64. Altholz, *op. cit.*, pp.27–8

65. In 1865 he publicly declared that he belonged "rather to the soul than the body of the Catholic Church". (Altholz, *op. cit.*, pp.46, 60 & 234)

isolated from, the prevailing spirit of the age, militant and fortified by ecclesiastical discipline. To Ultramontane reckoning, the liberal Catholics had imbibed too much of the rationalism of the times. One battleground was the domain of education.

Newman had long sympathised with the *Rambler*, especially its abiding aim of meeting the intellectual challenges of the day and fostering an educated laity. Nevertheless he sought to mollify its wayward tendencies and "indefensible" literary style — "its method, its tone, and its mode of saying things".⁶⁶ Newman steered a mid-course between opposing camps and attempted to curb excesses on both sides. The price paid for attempting to reason with those connected with the *Rambler* and its successor, the *Home and Foreign Review*, was that they frequently invoked Newman's authority for what they said, and thereby sheltered under his name.

Insofar as Newman completely rejected liberalism in religion, their claim on him was misplaced. In matters concerning the freedom of intellectual enquiry, Newman argued against a narrow circumscription by ecclesiastical authority, and was therefore counted with them. Consequently it was suspected that Newman had never really espoused Catholic principles and attitudes. As his thoughts were couched in a form and language unfamiliar to cradle Catholics, his writings were frequently suspected of being tainted with heresy. Norman makes a nice distinction when commenting that twentieth-century admirers tend to attribute all their favoured ideas to Newman, whereas his nineteenth-century detractors represented him as the repository of all dangerous ones!⁶⁷

Newman's educational background and work as an Anglican

John Henry Newman (1801–90) was the eldest of six children, born into a happy and secure family. After a stimulating and varied early education at home, he was sent at the age of seven to Ealing School, a large, very successful private boarding establishment.

66. Newman gave five reasons for his diagnosis: there was "a great deal of satire, more or less covert, aimed at [the] Cardinal [...] and on the whole a tone of hostility"; there was a "reckless expression of unusual opinions"; they interfered in matters that did not concern them, such as the education of the clergy; the style was a flippant, off-hand "Protestant-review-like statement of new views"; and they went out of their way to poke fun at sacred things or people. (Newman to Monsell, 14 Nov 1862, *L&D* XX, p.354)

67. Norman, *op. cit.*, pp.320–2 & 327

Although principally a preparatory school for Winchester and Westminster, Newman opted to remain there till he was 15, against his father's wish. Ealing was quite unlike the public schools: it had first-class facilities, a homely atmosphere, a broad curriculum, specialist teachers and small classes.⁶⁸ Newman excelled in his studies and participated enthusiastically in school life, acting in Latin plays, playing the violin, engaging in debating, leading a boys' society and editing several school magazines.⁶⁹ Newman's stress on the role of personal influence in education can be traced back to his early formative days. Nicholas, the scholarly and cultured headmaster, befriended Newman from the start and accorded him special privileges. Mayers, a Classics master, deeply influenced Newman through his sermons, conversations and suggested reading.⁷⁰ Meanwhile Newman's mother kept up with all his academic enthusiasms as best she could.⁷¹

At 16 Newman went up to Trinity College, Oxford. After his "seven years of plenty", Trinity was a chastening experience. He learnt little from his tutors and suffered from a lack of guidance. However, his undergraduate days taught him one lesson: the need for a good pupil-teacher relationship. Almost despite Trinity and its undergraduate rowdiness, Newman continued to pursue an impressive range of interests. He also tutored his three sisters and two brothers by post, setting them demanding and varied academic tasks.⁷² In 1822 Newman won one of the coveted Oriel fellowships and in 1823 took Anglican orders. On becoming a college tutor in 1826 he gave up his curacy of St

68. There were 260 boarders in Newman's time, and 350 shortly afterwards. £400,000 had just been spent on improvements. The school had sumptuous dining and dormitory facilities, purpose-built classrooms, a fives court, a football pitch, a cricket square, a bathing pool, a large playground and 12 acres of gardens. There were six specialists each in literature and Classics, and two each in French and mathematics. Among these was G. Huxley, who taught Newman mathematics. Classes were between nine and 22 in size. (J. Jackson, *op. cit.*, pp.15, 31-5 & 61) The school prospectus claimed that it combined the advantages of Eton and Harrow with the more practical benefits of the "best mixed Schools of the Metropolis", such as King's College School and the City of London School. (H. Tristram, 'The school-days of Cardinal Newman', *Cornhill Magazine* LVIII, Jun 1925, pp.666-7)

69. Newman edited six magazines: the *Spy* (30 issues), the *Anti-Spy* (27 issues), the *Reformer*, the *Inspector*, the *Portfolio* (a political journal modelled on the *Spectator* — 20 issues) and the *Beholder* (40 issues). (J. Jackson, *op. cit.*, p.39)

70. Mayers, aged 26, and Newman, aged 15, were brought into intimate association during one summer vacation. (Tristram, 'The school-days of Cardinal Newman', p.676)

71. J. Jackson, *op. cit.*, pp.19-21 & 31-51

72. *Ibid.*, pp.24-8, 40 & 52-61



Clement's, a working-class parish, and the vice-principalship of St Alban's Hall.⁷³ Newman viewed his tutorship as a spiritual office, one way of fulfilling his ordination vows. He soon became worried by the "considerable profligacy" of the undergraduates, most of whom were "men of family", and by the lack of "direct religious instruction" for them.⁷⁴ In doing battle with those privileged young men he considered to be the ruin of the place, he incurred their resentment.⁷⁵ With other Oriel tutors he implemented various reforms: a reduction in the number of gentlemen-commoners; introduction of written work into termly college exams; revival of the Chapel sermon at Eucharist; and changes to the lecture system to favour serious students.⁷⁶

Newman felt strongly that secular education could become a pastoral cure, if conducted properly. He argued that in the Laudian statutes for Oxford "a Tutor was not a mere academical Policeman, or Constable, but a moral and religious guardian of the youths committed to him". As a tutor Newman found extra time for the more worthy undergraduates. "With such youths he cultivated relations, not only of intimacy, but of friendship, and almost of equality, [...] seeking their society in outdoor exercise, on evenings, and in Vacation."⁷⁷ The interest he showed was contagious: one tutee described him as like "an elder and affectionate brother".⁷⁸ Antagonism between the Provost of Oriel and the four tutors over their role — strictly disciplinary in the Provost's view, fully pastoral in theirs — led to deprivation of office. After their departure, Oriel's academic reputation slumped.⁷⁹ When his curate at Littlemore resigned Newman became concerned about the school there, and addressed its down-to-earth problems: poor attendance, bad

73. The latter involved giving lectures and acting as the only tutor, as well as Dean.

74. Newman's diary, 7 May 1826, *L&D* I, pp.286–7n

75. Newman to the editor, *Daily News*, 24 Oct 1884, *L&D* XXX, pp.422–3

76. Ker, *Newman: a biography*, pp.32 & 37–41; Culler, *op. cit.*, pp.56–79; K.C. Turpin, 'The ascendancy of Oriel', *The history of the University of Oxford* VI, ed. M.G. Brock & M.C. Curthoys, Oxford, 1997, pp.188–90

77. Newman's autobiographical memoir, 13 Jun 1874, *Autobiographical writings*, pp.90–1

78. T. Mozley, *Reminiscences* I, London, 1882, pp.180–1. In 1831 his pupils gave him 36 expensively bound volumes.

79. J. Jackson, *op. cit.*, p.69; Turpin, 'The ascendancy of Oriel', p.190; Culler, *op. cit.*, pp.64–9 & 79. Newman's autobiographical memoir about the Oriel tutorship can be found in *Autobiographical writings*, pp.86–107.

behaviour and scruffiness.⁸⁰

The Tractarian or Oxford Movement began in 1833 with the publication of the first of the *Tracts for the Times*. The *Tracts* by Newman and his associates asserted the principles of apostolic succession and spiritual independence of church from state. Their aim was to reform the Established Church which they viewed as one of the three branches of the one true Church, and to defend it against liberalism. Newman's leadership was exercised particularly through his sermons at St Mary's, the University Church.⁸¹ After *Tract 90* he withdrew from the Movement and retired to Littlemore to live a semi-monastic life of prayer and study. Three years later, in 1845, he became a Catholic.

Newman's educational work as a Catholic and Oratorian

Wiseman made Old Oscott available for Newman and his convert friends from Littlemore. In 1846 Newman and St John went to study at the College of Propaganda in Rome and were ordained priests a year later. Searching on behalf of himself and his followers for something between the religious life and the secular priesthood, Newman chose the Rule of the Oratory, "almost secular, but nonetheless a Rule".⁸² The nature of this Rule needs to be understood as it affected the Oratory School's identity and its place in the Catholic educational system. The Rule enables priests to undertake parochial duties in large towns and cities, while benefiting from community life, and was particularly suited to Oxford converts used to collegiate living. The "external secularism with a gentle inward bond of asceticism"⁸³ could be combined with study and apostolic activities. Each Oratory house is juridically distinct and self-governing, thereby able to develop its own style by adapting the Rule to particular circumstances and local needs. In 1847 the Pope issued the

80. Newman's memorandum: state of the school at Littlemore, 9 Mar 1840, *L&D* VII, p.250. He began spending vacations at Littlemore where he helped out "reforming, or at least lecturing against, uncombed hair and dirty faces and hands", teaching the children to sing (accompanying them on his violin) and giving them catechism classes on Sunday afternoons. (Newman to Mrs Mozley, 12 Mar 1840, *L&D* VII, p.259)

81. They are published in nine volumes: *Parochial sermons* (6 vols), *Plain sermons*, *Sermons chiefly on religious belief preached at Oxford* and *Sermons bearing on subjects of the day*.

82. Letter in Latin to 'His Eminence Cardinal Fransoni from some recent English converts', 14 Feb 1847, *L&D* XII, p.37. The translation comes from *Newman the Oratorian: his unpublished Oratory papers*, ed. P. Murray, Dublin, 1969, p.152.

83. Newman to Dalgairns, 18 Oct 1846, *L&D* XI, p.263

Oratorian Brief that established the first Oratory in England, at Birmingham, with Newman as its superior. It was modelled on the Oratory in Rome, but with certain modifications. Significantly, at Newman's request, it granted permission to keep a boys' boarding school, in case of necessity.⁸⁴ On the Pope's initiative it added that the Oratory should work specially "among bodies of men of a more elevated, learned and illustrious class".⁸⁵

On their return to England, Wiseman asked Newman to accept as Oratorians a group of converts led by Faber,⁸⁶ called Wilfridians, who had themselves just been established and settled at Cotton Hall, renamed St Wilfrid's. The addition of 17 Wilfridians to the six original Oratorians caused difficulties, particularly as differences developed between Faber and Newman. The solution was to establish an Oratory in London under Faber. It became the leading English centre of Roman devotions and acquired a marked Ultramontane reputation. A quarrel between the houses concerning the hearing of nuns' confessions led to an appeal to Rome and a trip to Propaganda by Newman and St John. A significant divergence between the Oratories concerned educational work. Newman's emphasis on it was held by Faber to be a departure from the intentions of the founder. It was to give rise to yet another controversy that involved the school.⁸⁷

Unable to dispose of St Wilfrid's, Newman devised various uses for it.⁸⁸ He

84. The Rule can be divided into two sections: the Decrees of the General Congregation, which concerned the nature of the institution; and the customs, dating back to the time of the founder, St Philip Neri, which had developed and been embodied in the Rule. Newman requested that only the Decrees be binding and that the customs, adapted by him for England, be recommended. (R. Addington, *The idea of the Oratory*, London, 1966, pp.63, 105-14, 117 & 127-8) After charting the origins and development of the Oratory, Addington devotes a chapter to Newman's idea of the Oratory. (*Ibid.*, pp.98-137)

85. This is a translation of the phrase used in the Brief of Institution: *splendidioris, doctioris, et honestioris ordinis hominum*. Addington relates that Newman was surprised at this addition as it went beyond, if not contrary, to his earlier suggestions for the Rule. (*Ibid.*, pp.113-14)

86. Frederick William Faber (1814-63) was educated at Harrow School and Balliol College, Oxford and became a Fellow of University College. He met Newman in 1837 and was received into the Catholic Church in 1845. He founded the community of Brothers of the Will of God in Birmingham.

87. Addington devotes a chapter to Faber's idea of the Oratory which brings out the differences with Newman's. (*Ibid.*, pp.139-76)

88. The Wilfridians had undertaken an obligation to Lord Shrewsbury to serve the mission there and had invested £7000 in it. As ecclesiastical property, it could not be sold other than to Catholics, but the Midland District was too poor to buy it. The problem the Oratorians faced was how to maintain it. (W. Buscot, *The*

considered beginning a school there, a sort of "Eton of the Oratory", from which future Oratorian vocations would come.⁸⁹ This was superseded by a plan for both Oratories to establish a college there for youths over 15, which, if it prospered, would become independent.⁹⁰ The plan petered out because of the reluctance of the London Oratory. A third false start involved St John using one of his two houses adjacent to the Oratory as a school⁹¹. All three plans were forerunners of the one that came to fruition in 1859.⁹²

Newman had high aspirations for an educated laity by means of the Catholic University.⁹³ In the hope that standards could be raised, it was made possible for schools

history of Cotton College at Sedgley Park, 1763-1873: at Cotton, 1873-, London, 1940, p.238)

89. Newman did not go beyond saying whether "it would take the formal shape of a Seminary, school, noviceship or College". (Newman to Faber, 10 May 1849, *L&D* XIII, pp.142-3) A draft prospectus from July 1849 states that "The Fathers of the Oratory receive boys for education, from the age of eight and upwards, at their House at St Wilfrid's, near Cheadle. Education is conducted on the system pursued at the Universities and public schools of the Kingdom". The basic curriculum was to be Latin, Greek and mathematics. Extras were to include the study of French, Italian, German, Hebrew, drawing and music. (*L&D* XIII, p.421n; reprinted in Buscot, *op. cit.*, p.238)

90. The final printed draft prospectus was entitled "College of the Fathers of the Oratory, St Wilfrid's". It states that the education would be based "on the system pursued in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge." All nine staff listed were converts from Oxford or Cambridge and all but one Oratorians. (*L&D* XIII, pp.420-1) The "New College at St Wilfrid's" was to offer Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Syriac, Italian, German and French, besides mathematics and general literature. (Advertisement in the *Rambler*, Feb 1850, p.202) Buscot quotes in full a five-point manifesto about the new college which he attributes to Faber and the London Oratorians. He claims its idea was "widely different" from Newman's. (Buscot, *op. cit.*, pp. 239-40) This attribution is at odds with the correspondence between Faber and Newman. (Faber to Newman 23 & 27 Dec 1849, *L&D* XIII, pp.344n & 348) The manifesto was written by Newman, as the style is similar to his draft school manifesto in 1859. The document may be one referred to in Newman to Faber, 10 Jan 1850, *L&D* XIII, p.380.

91. Newman to Allies, 27 Apr 1852 & Newman to Gordon, 13 May 1852, *L&D* XV, pp.75 & 87. Newman asked St John to give Allies first refusal as schoolmaster. On becoming a Catholic in 1850, Allies had opened a small school in Golden Square, which moved to St John's Wood. (M. Bryant, *The London experience of secondary education*, London, 1986, p.224)

92. Newman to Bellasis, 28 Oct 1857, *L&D* XVIII, p.153. Despite the failed attempts, Newman was keen to begin an Oratorian venture for the upper classes, preferably for youths rather than boys. ('Remarks on the Oratorian vocation', 1856, Murray, *op. cit.*, p.30)

93. They can be seen in the ten objectives he proposed for Catholic education at the Synod of bishops in 1854:

- "1. To provide means of finishing the education of young men of rank, fortune, or expectations, with a view of putting them on a level with Protestants of the same description.
2. To provide a professional education for students of law and medicine; and a liberal education for the mercantile class.
3. To develop the talents of promising youths in the lower classes.
4. To form a school of Theology and Canon Law [...]
5. To provide a series of sound and philosophical Defences of Christianity and Revelation, in answer to the

to affiliate themselves to the university. Six did so during Newman's rectorship.⁹⁴ To embark on a degree, the university stipulated the completion of a liberal studies course for those aged 16–18, and it provided one such course itself.⁹⁵ Four collegiate houses were established at the university including one under Newman. The greater liberty in his reflected Newman's view that discipline at university was, as a preparation for the world, characterised more by "a certain tenderness, or even laxity of rule" than similarity with school or college discipline. In his first university report he laid down the "guiding principle [...] that the young for the most part cannot be driven, but [...] are open to persuasion, and to influence of kindness and personal attachment". Thus they were to be guided by "indirect contrivances rather than by authoritative enactments and naked prohibitions".⁹⁶ A disciplinary incident occurred in 1857 which was later used to tell against the Oratory School. It was held up as evidence of Newman's inability to establish good order and of the danger inherent in granting extensive freedom.⁹⁷

By withdrawing from the university, Newman was consciously making himself available to his fellow countrymen whom he considered had the first claim on him.⁹⁸ At the Oratory he was anxious about gaining new members and on the look out for additional

infidel tenets and arguments, which threaten us at this time.

6. To create a national Catholic Literature.

7. To provide school books, and, generally, books of instruction, for the use of [English speaking] Catholics [...]

8. To raise the standard, and to systematise the teaching, and encourage the efforts, of the Schools [...]

9. To give a Catholic tone to Society in the great Towns.

10. To respond to the growing importance to Ireland [...]"

(Newman's memorandum: on the objects of the university and the means for attaining them, read by the Rector to the Synodal Meeting, 20 May 1854, *L&D* XVI, pp.557–8)

94. Schools were invited to affiliate on condition that they reached a minimum standard, ascertained by a formal inspection and an annual competition organised by the university staff. (McGrath, *op. cit.*, pp.372–3)

95. It included compulsory Latin as well as two optional subjects, among which were mathematics and science. (Culler, *op. cit.*, p.160)

96. 'Report for the year 1854/55', *My campaign in Ireland*, pp.36–8

97. Two factors aggravated the situation: the lack of a vice-Rector whose responsibilities included discipline, and the slow resolution of the matter due to Newman's absence from Dublin. (Newman to Butler, 17 Dec 1857, *L&D* XVIII, pp.205–6) Newman had continued as Superior of the Birmingham Oratory during his rectorship of the Catholic University, crossing the Irish Sea nearly 60 times in the process.

98. Newman's services were soon called upon. He became involved with the *Rambler*, in offering advice to de Lisle on his crusade for corporate reunion with the Church of England, and answering Wiseman's invitation to make a new translation of the Bible into English.

spheres of activity. While educational plans for St Wilfrid's had not prospered,⁹⁹ the Oratory had addressed the educational needs of several convert families by taking in boys and providing tuition.¹⁰⁰ It was natural that long-standing friends of Newman should turn to him for guidance on a matter on which he was so well qualified to advise: the education of their sons. His recent availability raised the prospect of collaboration in solving their need. Being almost entirely converts, the promoters of the Oratory School had much in common. In the wake of the Oxford Movement they had thrown in their lot on becoming Catholics, in many cases losing friends, career advancement and the esteem of the world. Much though this was, it was not all that characterised this party and bound them together. The extra ingredient was an admiration for Newman and an identification with his outlook and understanding of the world.¹⁰¹ Two of Newman's closest friends, Bellasis and Hope-Scott, were to become chief agent and principal adviser to the school, respectively. Together with Newman, they are the protagonists of the school story.

The educational background of Bellasis

Edward Bellasis (1800–73) was educated at Christ's Hospital. After working in a solicitor's office he studied at Inner Temple and was called to the Bar in 1824. Until his retirement in 1867, he practised almost exclusively in the Court of Chancery. In 1844 he was introduced as Serjeant-in-Law at the House of Lords. His professional work was mainly related to the expansion of the railways but he also worked on navigation bills, laws on salmon fisheries, and acts for regulating water supply to large towns. He knew Faraday and became one of the managers of the Royal Institution. Furthermore his interest in science was of great use to him in his profession.¹⁰² He was admired for his

99. Jackson asserts that Newman bided his time, after the failure of these plans. He "was always secretive about his intention to pioneer a new kind of Catholic school, so secretive that his closest colleagues barely knew of their existence". (J. Jackson, *op. cit.*, p.82)

100. The son of Thynne was removed from Newman's house at Dublin on account of his bad influence, and received at Edgbaston where he was tutored by Darnell. After becoming Catholics, two sons of the seventh Marquis of Lothian were tutored at the Oratory in 1854, before transferring to the Catholic University. From 1848, two or three boys were being educated at any one time: at £50 p.a. for those below 14 years, and £70 p.a. for those above. Attempts to gather together half a dozen boys were unsuccessful. (Newman to Thompson, 12 Jun 1853, *L&D* XV, p.379)

101. For an account of the friendships of Newman see H. Tristram, *Newman and his friends*, London, 1933.

102. At 35, in his first case before a Parliamentary Committee, he had to cross-examine I.K. Brunel over a Great Western Railway project, which meant immersing himself in technicalities. Later that year he was

calmness, courtesy and eye for detail. He frequently began working on his briefs at 4 a.m. despite only accepting work he felt able to manage, and turning down many lucrative fees.¹⁰³

Bellasis married in 1829 but his first wife died three years later, as did his first child. He remarried in 1835 and had 13 more children, four sons and nine daughters, of whom ten survived. The youngest was born in 1859. He began reading the *Tracts* and Newman's sermons in 1836, and went to Oxford to meet him. Thus began their long friendship. Unlike his father and brothers, Bellasis was not an Oxford man but he was soon accepted by the Tractarians. He corresponded on a range of religious topics and in the process produced four pamphlets — "all valuable"¹⁰⁴ in Newman's opinion. It is clear that Bellasis's religion did not remain at the level of notions as it inspired him to live an exemplary Christian life.¹⁰⁵

The education of his children was a concern close to Bellasis's heart. Two of his pamphlets pointed out that, for those like himself who had children to educate, the confusion in Anglican teaching and the absence of clear authority were a recipe for doubt and indifference. He complained "that the clergy seem unable to understand the position of the laity; I do not believe that they can realise the difficulties pressing upon fathers of families like myself".¹⁰⁶ Two of the seven reasons he gave for becoming a Catholic, in 1850, concerned the education of his children. Years later he confided to a son that "the

junior counsel for G. Stephenson's Manchester to Birmingham railway scheme, and thereafter his work continually brought him into contact with G. and R. Stephenson, Bidder and other great civil engineers.

103. E. Bellasis, *The memorials of Mr Serjeant Bellasis, 1800–1873*, London, 1893, pp.4–21. Written by his son Edward, this biography provides a factual account of his life that makes abundant use of his correspondence and *MS autobiography*.

104. Newman to E. Bellasis, 19 Oct 1882, *L&D XXX*, p.139

105. In 1832 he began the practice of drawing up every Lent "some six to fourteen rules of observance submitting them to the clergyman of his district for approval". After his second wife's second child died he began to attend church services daily, a practice he continued to the end of his life. (Bellasis, *Memorials of Mr Serjeant Bellasis*, pp.40–57)

106. Bellasis's third pamphlet, *The Archbishop of Westminster: a remonstrance with the clergy of Westminster, from a Westminster Magistrate*, 1850, p.14. He worried about "children growing up, without the possibility of imbuing them with a docile, confiding spirit towards their religious instructors, becoming of necessity, critical rather than reverential, when I consider that what they are now taught may have to be acted out hereafter, not with the help of the Church, but, in all probability, in the teeth of her chief authorities". (Bellasis's second pamphlet, *Convocations and synods: are they the remedies for existing evils?*, 1850)

one great object of my life is to see all my dear children firmly planted and steadily growing in the Catholic Church".¹⁰⁷

In 1857 Bellasis was fast approaching the time when he would have to decide on his sons' education. His involvement in the school plan was to meet this pressing need, but he did not come to it as a novice for he had long pondered over matters educational. His foreign tour of 1833, which had begun to undo his anti-Catholic prejudices, included visits to many Catholic schools, mainly ones run by the Christian Brothers. In his opinion, "we have nothing to compare with them, either as to the regularity and order of the schools, the extent of the secular education, the carefulness with which the religious instruction is conveyed, or the number and character of the masters".¹⁰⁸ Bellasis was equally impressed with their schools in Preston and by Stonyhurst. A distinguishing characteristic of the Oratory School was to be its emphasis on academic standards, guaranteed by properly salaried masters. It is instructive to note that in 1843 Bellasis had already considered the relative merits of the two systems, and that his verdict was open: "it remains to be seen whether a system of education conducted entirely by masters, who are stipendiaries, can compete with a system where the instructors labour for the love of God".¹⁰⁹ Altogether there is a quality in his observations that betrays a more than average interest and discernment, and which made him eminently suitable as a guiding hand in the new foundation.¹¹⁰

After 1850 Bellasis began to move in old Catholic circles where he witnessed the habits of Catholic households. (This integration into higher Catholic society is an important component in McClelland's assessment of the foundation.) Bellasis was "particularly struck with the unobtrusive and natural manner in which religion was mixed

107. Bellasis, *Memorials of Mr Serjeant Bellasis*, pp. 105-6 & Bellasis to his son Edward (on the occasion of his First Communion), 5 Dec 1862, *ibid.*, p.136

108. Bellasis to W.G. Ward, Jan 1844, *ibid.*, p.33

109. He thought the Catholic schools in Preston were far superior to the Protestant schools there which had great difficulty in securing masters, "£60 per annum being barely sufficient to obtain even one moderately qualified". (Letter from Bellasis, 18 Aug 1843, *ibid.*, p.36)

110. He told a friend that he and his wife had just seen the "school of sixty girls, of which you have heard us speak, with great interest; these young ladies have managed by kindness and attention to attach these girls to them in a manner quite surprising, and their knowledge of true Catholic doctrine is quite refreshing". (Bellasis to Twining, 13 Dec 1843, *ibid.*, p.42)

up with the ordinary affairs and even amusements of life". His wife considered the "old Catholic Yorkshire houses [...] models of what Christian households may and ought to be".¹¹¹ These visits had a profound effect on the Bellasis household, as part of the process of immersing himself and his family in Catholic life. Family prayers took place morning and night; they gathered in the evening to say the Rosary; when travelling by carriage to an evening function they recited the Litany.¹¹²

In 1853 Bellasis became a trustee of a Catholic girls' school in London, but his real interest lay in the development of young people rather than serving on committees. This was reflected in his untiring fulfilment of paternal duties. He encouraged his children to have an observant spirit and develop an intelligent interest in all they saw. With them he shared his interests in electricity, optics, astronomy and meteorology. The letters to his children at school reveal the interest he took in their concerns: debates, school sports and hobbies. His son Edward relates how he was never too tired to teach, entertain or amuse his offspring after work. He encouraged them to take up musical instruments and organised singing and theatricals at home. His efforts to stimulate his children's generosity bore fruits.¹¹³ Three of his daughters became nuns and two sons became priests of the Oratory. Although not wholly typical, family life at the Bellasis household gives an insight into the authentic Christian living of the converts. It was to complement such a home background that Bellasis was in search of a suitable school education.¹¹⁴

The educational background of Hope-Scott

James Hope (1812–73) was the third son of General Hope, Governor of the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst and MP for Linlithgowshire. Before entering Eton in 1825 he was educated abroad for four years under a Classical tutor, then spent a year each at

111. Letter from Mrs Bellasis, n.d., *ibid.*, p.142

112. In these and other practices he introduced, he was sensitive to the tolerance of his children and kept prayers short to avoid wearying them. (*Ibid.*, pp.140–3)

113. "Take pleasure in giving pleasure to your school-fellows" he once advised a son. He initiated an original custom for family birthdays. The child whose birthday was approaching was given a sum with which to buy presents for everyone else, from father down to the scullery-maid, the balance going to the poor. (*Ibid.*, pp.150–1)

114. Long before Thomas More's beatification, Bellasis adopted him as his patron saint and sought to imitate him in his domestic life. (*Ibid.*, pp.157–178)

a grammar school and a preparatory school feeding Eton. At Eton, under Keate, he was one of the best scholars and lived in a dame's house. After studying at Christ Church, Oxford he was elected a Fellow of Merton College where he began to develop a grasp of educational and ecclesiastical organisations that was to make him an authority on both.¹¹⁵ By 1837 Hope had become a committed Tractarian. Spiritual diaries from the period reveal "an incessant endeavour after holiness".¹¹⁶ His friendship with Newman began in 1838 and, according to his biographer, "rapidly assumed a very intimate and confidential character, and was indeed *the* great friendship of Mr Hope's life".¹¹⁷

In 1840–41 he toured Germany and Italy where he made detailed investigations of the organisation of the Catholic Church. From 1840 he collaborated with Gladstone in founding Trinity College, Glenalmond.¹¹⁸ Hope's influence in shaping Glenalmond provides a useful key for assessing his later contribution to forming the Oratory School, particularly after the Darnell crisis. The purpose of "an Eton, on very modest terms" was to provide the Episcopal Church, the little sister church in Scotland of the Anglican Church, with a much needed collegiate institution for the education of its ministers. Correspondence between the two leading spirits, friends from undergraduate days, reveals the matters they attempted to resolve: systems of tuition, ways of attracting suitable teachers, and the use of married tutors. Initially Hope contemplated an ecclesiastical school on a continental model — boys up to 12 or 13 living together under the same conditions; thereafter, church and lay boys separating, the former joining students of divinity and having their own studies and activities, the latter moving to different premises on the same site — whereas Gladstone wanted it to provide a full education for the laity

115. At Merton he compiled a report for a committee that sought to reform the college and bring about a closer identification with the original statutes. The purpose of the intended reforms was for the college to become a seed-bed for well-formed clergy. He embarked on an extensive *History of the Colleges* with his friend Palmer (Earl of Selbourne) but both were too busy professionally to complete it. Gladstone used Hope's expertise in checking his treatise, *The State in its relations with the Church*. Hope also wrote a detailed article about the statutes of Magdalen College: 'The Statutes of Magdalen College, Oxford', *British Critic*, Apr 1840, pp.355–96. (R. Ornsby, *Memoirs of James Robert Hope-Scott* I, London, 1884, pp.1–22 & 177–92)

116. The diaries are from the period 1836–38. They contain prayers, resolutions and reflections, notes from examinations of conscience, and his agenda for daily life. (*Ibid.*, pp.99–103)

117. *Ibid.*, p.172

118. According to an historian of Glenalmond, the three chief founders were Gladstone, Hope and, to a lesser extent, Dean Ramsay. (G.St. Quintin, *The history of Glenalmond*, Edinburgh, 1956, p.1)

too. Gladstone's conception prevailed but his increasing political commitments meant that Hope assumed the leading role. He involved himself in practicalities: drafting circulars, communicating with the bishops, securing financial backing, choosing the school site and finding a suitable Warden.¹¹⁹

In striving to make Glenalmond accessible to the growing middle classes Hope wrestled with the problem of

how young men of different ranks and fortune shall have the benefit of a common education without allowing the growth of habits which will be injurious to one or other class — particularly how the clergy shall receive a strict clerical education in contact with, and yet without being secularised by, the laity.

Hope contended that the "higher tone of religious and moral character" at English institutions, which mixed church and lay boys, was invariably purchased at too high a cost: the distortion of founders' intentions to educate clergy. He suggested imitating the pattern of medieval foundations: beginning with a clerical establishment and adding a lay part later. He recommended that endowments should only be used for clerical education and that the religious tone be preserved by making greater use of surveillance.¹²⁰ By the time Glenalmond was opened in 1847, after four years of building activity, Hope had adopted a lower profile on account of his advanced Tractarianism.¹²¹

Hope was called to the Bar in 1838. Although he gained early fame in ecclesiastical law, he elected to work at the Parliamentary Bar on legislation for railways. He became standing counsel to nearly every railway system in the country and for a decade was unrivalled in reputation. He was greatly admired for his tact and charm, as well as his eloquence, clarity of thought and memory for detail.¹²² While his immense capacity enabled him to undertake much lucrative work, its confinement to the six-monthly

119. Ornsby, *op. cit.* I, pp.207–64

120. Gladstone pointed out that there was no separation of church and lay boys in English Catholic colleges, but Hope insisted on it. He explained that he had been strengthened in his conviction after touring abroad, though he admitted he was unsure about the premise of his argument, "that, starting well with a large lay project, it will be difficult to exclude the lay principle of the day". (Hope to W.E. Gladstone, 6 Sep & 18 Nov 1840, 5 Jan & 3 Aug 1841; Gladstone to Hope, 8 Sep 1840, *ibid.*, pp.207–13, 242–4 & 274–82.)

121. Hope was persuaded by Gladstone and others not to proceed with his offer of £6000 to the foundation. He served with Gladstone on its English Committee but was left off the Council in 1845. (*Ibid.*, pp.277–82)

122. Gladstone described him as "the most winning person of his day". (Entry in the *Dictionary of national biography* — henceforth abbreviated to *DNB*)

parliamentary sessions allowed him time for other pursuits.¹²³

In 1847 Hope married a grand-daughter of Walter Scott. On the death of his brother-in-law he inherited Abbotsford and assumed the name Hope-Scott. In 1851 he and Manning, friends since they were Fellows at Merton, were received into the Catholic Church. His wife and other relations followed him. Like Bellasis, Hope-Scott was welcomed in old Catholic circles where he learnt from their practices. A guest at Abbotsford described the atmosphere there as "the most perfect type of a really Christian household". Hope spent most of his patrimony supporting organisations more or less in the service of religion, and undertook the guardianship of the children of several friends and relations.¹²⁴

Hope-Scott's advice was so highly valued that the expression 'ask Hope' became proverbial. Eton chose him to act as counsel before the Select Committee of the House of Lords on the Public Schools Bill.¹²⁵ He became Newman's chief adviser, managed his defence in the libel action *Achilli v. Newman*, negotiated his appointment as Rector of the Catholic University and assisted him in setting it up.¹²⁶ Ecclesiastical leaders also confided in him and took his advice when acting on behalf of the Catholic body.¹²⁷ No one was better suited to act as adviser for the new foundation.

123. Ornsby, *op. cit.* II, pp.93–131

124. This included his brother's eight children, the seven children of a convert friend who died young, and the children of an old law tutor. (*Ibid.*, pp.129–41)

125. At the time Catholics were not permitted to teach at Eton, Westminster or Winchester. Hope-Scott's mastery of ecclesiastical and educational foundations is evident from his performance. (British Parliamentary Papers, 1865, X, Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords, 22 May 1865, pp.189–222) His mature opinion of Eton reflected a mixture of affection and dissatisfaction. In its "unsystematic and natural growth [...] you find at once its force and its weakness". Its force was its ability to draw on the "prime boys of England"; its weakness derived from being "a plant of natural growth, arising out of the English character, and meeting its wants". He argued that Eton's imperfection arose because it had emerged "from the natural habits of the people of England, without any direction of statutes or prescription of patents as to how it is to be conducted [...] It sprang up of itself. The English character made it, and it makes the English character". (*Ibid.*, p.209) However, he told his Classical tutor, a fellow of Magdalen College, that "I like Eton, but, if I have a son, he shall never go there". (Ornsby, *op. cit.* I, p.16)

126. He advised Newman to begin the university in a small way and gradually.

127. *Ibid.* II, pp.196–210 and entry in *DNB*

Conclusion

The preceding four sections illustrate the wealth of experience and depth of talent that was brought to bear on the educational problem the converts faced. As Jackson argues, Newman's educational ideas were held from an early age and founded upon personal experience.¹²⁸ When he established the Oratory School he was undoubtedly influenced by the excellent arrangements at Ealing. Bellasis and Hope-Scott had studied a wide variety of schools, at home and abroad. Besides an immense capacity for work and other admirable qualities, the three protagonists also had in common a profound Christian faith. Their joint activity can therefore be viewed as the product of religious impulse, inviting comparison with other foundations issuing from the Oxford Movement, such as those of Sewell or Woodard.¹²⁹

The remainder of this thesis draws on the content of this background information in order to address important questions: about the school — to assess its unique contribution; about the Catholic educational system — to re-evaluate its strengths and weaknesses; about the times — to examine the interaction of ideas from separate traditions and competing views of a Christian attitude to an increasingly secular world; and about perennial problems — the quest for a balanced education and the scope of lay activity in an ecclesial communion.

128. J. Jackson, *op. cit.*, p.15

129. Heeney claims that Woodard was "the chief apostle of Tractarianism to secondary education". Manning and S.F. Wood worked before Woodard, while those after included Sewell (founding St Columba's in 1843 and Radley in 1847), Stevens (founding Bradfield in 1850), Egerton at Bloxham (founded in 1859 by Hewitt) and Chamberlain (founding St Edward's, Oxford in 1863). (B. Heeney, *Mission to the middle classes: the Woodard Schools, 1848-1891*, London, 1969, pp.49-50)

CHAPTER III A CATHOLIC DESIDERATUM: A PUBLIC SCHOOL

All foundational periods have their particular phases, reflecting the uneven passage from idea into reality, and that of the Oratory School was no exception. Initially, independently of each other, several converts warmed to the idea of cooperating with Newman to begin a school. At a series of meetings organised by Bellasis, plans were discussed and a shared objective arrived at. After the initial enthusiasm, wider soundings were taken to rally sufficient support to convince Newman to found a school on their behalf. This exposure to a broader cross-section of Catholics enabled the founding ideals to be tested. A period of stagnation followed. A modest start was made after a significant concession by Newman and generous commitments by the few prepared to take the necessary risks.

A thorough analysis of the foundational period is required to answer key questions about the school: what was founded, who founded it, why and how? None of Newman's biographers delve into the matter, while the historians of Catholic education only supply partial answers. McClelland alone has investigated the school's origins but his substantial claims strike a discordant note. This chapter aims to address these questions, thereby filling important gaps in our knowledge, resolving inconsistencies, and assessing McClelland's theses.

Who founded the school and where did the real impetus come from? Evennett states that Newman responded to a call from parents, principally converts.¹ McClelland asserts that the school was the outcome of an attempt by the Catholic aristocracy "to enlist the support and sympathy of Newman in favour of their cause".² Further questions can be asked about the origin of the foundation. To what extent did Newman assume responsibility for it, and who else was chiefly involved? Did the real impetus come from converts, or did it arise from old Catholics and converts alike? To what extent did the founding body comprise the aristocracy, the gentry or the professional classes? Does the claim that the founding impulse came from liberal Catholics have any validity? Answers

1. Evennett, *op. cit.*, p.70

2. "The Oratory School was the outcome of an attempt by the Duke of Norfolk, Viscount Campden, Lord Fielding, Lord Charles Thynne, Lord Henry Kerr, Sir John Acton, Sir Robert Throckmorton, Sir John Simeon, and others to enlist the support and sympathy of Newman in favour of their cause." (McClelland, *School or Cloister?*, p.126)

to these more detailed questions will identify those responsible for deciding the school's characteristics.

Why was the Oratory School founded? According to Evennett, it was to gain what the collegiate system could not offer; a Catholic school along the lines of an English public school, "where feminine care and influence [...] could be exercised in a manner impossible in ecclesiastical colleges like Oscott or Stonyhurst".³ For McClelland the foundation served a two-fold purpose: it enabled the aristocracy to gain "an exclusive education for their sons", as they were unhappy with the social mix in the colleges, and "to exclude episcopal oversight".⁴ How was it founded? Neither Barnes nor Evennett gives details. Trevor identifies Bellasis as the leader of those who pressed Newman to start it,⁵ but McClelland claims that the Catholic aristocracy were its real instigators. McClelland maintains that they used Bellasis to sound Newman out on shared education in the hope that they could achieve their two goals by employing Newman. McClelland's interpretation provides the basis for a broader argument which it is appropriate to give at this juncture.

McClelland asserts that, like other converts, Bellasis had become captivated by the charm of life at houses of the traditional Catholic landed families. These families were convinced of the benefits deriving from a Christian aristocracy, and the converts were to join them in their aloofness. This led to the two groups uniting to pursue similar educational aims. In doing so, the foundation can be viewed as an attempt to perpetuate a feudal division of society by the upper echelons, to which Bellasis and others had gained entry. Catholic leaders of the time perceived a danger in this alliance. "Instead of the converts being assimilated into Catholic modes of thought and action there was a distinct danger that the old families themselves might become even more infected by a worldly and Protestant outlook." They were suspicious of Newman's motives for a Catholic Eton; that a school under converts, for their sons and those of Gallican Catholics, would be like Eton in matters religious as well as secular. Newman's bishop was wary because the

3. Evennett, *op. cit.*, p.70

4. McClelland, *School or Cloister?*, p. 116

5. Trevor, *Light in winter*, p.178

Oratory seemed to be playing into hands of the aristocracy. He saw in the alliance "the perpetuation of the class hatreds and jealousies which had so bedeviled the last years of the Vicars Apostolic".⁶

McClelland believes that the foundation fitted a pattern of events. The first thwarted attempt by the Catholic aristocracy, in 1794, to found a school for the education of the laity alone, along the lines of Protestant schools, had two clearly discernible characteristics: the desire for an "exclusive education" and the "wish to be free of episcopal surveillance". It provides a useful key for understanding later events, especially the foundation of the Oratory School by a similar social group. The foundation was one of "two bold attempts in the second half of the nineteenth century to disrupt the pattern" of shared education, both based on the belief that, instead of spreading the sons of the well-to-do thinly among the colleges, "one new college was essential to enable such youths to be educated together to the exclusion of social inferiors and to offset undue clerical influence and harsh discipline".⁷

This full study of the foundational period (1857–59) of the Oratory School reveals the promoters' aspirations and how they were blended into a single scheme. The calibre of those involved is suggestive of the quality of the outcome. Insofar as the foundation sought to merge two educational traditions, it provoked an informed and (for us) enlightening discussion of the merits and shortcomings of both. One feature which Mohnen claims to be substantially innovative should be noted here. Harder to identify and unvoiced as a characteristic, either at the time or later, it is that the school broke new ground as a joint foundation with parents. This study tests the extent to which it was so. The story of the school's origins displays the resolve of the converts in bringing to bear their initiative and experience on an educational problem that had been extensively controverted in Catholic periodicals, but left unresolved. A practical solution was offered which challenged the collegiate system by addressing its deficiencies. Considerable will-power was called for to overcome the obstacles and carry the plan through. This study reveals what inspired them and how they went about the task.

6. McClelland, 'A Catholic Eton', pp.4–7 & 10–12

7. McClelland, 'School or Cloister?', pp.116 & 126

Analysis of the foundational period has been neglected in Newman studies. By 1857 Newman was a seasoned campaigner in educational ventures, but a man in his late fifties and somewhat weary after the frustrations at the Catholic University. The new venture he was being invited to join and lead was riddled with difficulties. Why did he agree? What were the conditions he laid down? The nature of his collaboration with the promoters was quite unusual and indicates that something special was afoot. McClelland has argued that Newman's "unconscious refinement" made him susceptible to social pressures: he thus saw the mixing of classes as a social evil. He was intent on forging links with the Catholic aristocracy and saw the school as a means of doing so, despite teaching not being part of the Oratorian vocation and despite deep-rooted opposition from within the Birmingham Oratory to the foundation of a boarding school. Newman pressurised the Oratory into adopting his scheme, hence McClelland's phrase: "by hook or by crook".⁸

First soundings (December 1856 – September 1857)

The idea of founding a Catholic public school cannot be attributed to the remarkable insight of any one individual. The need for one was obvious, especially to those convert friends of Newman who were anxious for the education of their sons.⁹ The first to turn to him for advice on the matter was Pollen.¹⁰ Their discussion coincided with Newman's concern about Darnell, who had just returned to the Oratory after two months convalescence and was "anxious for indoor employment, preferably teaching boys Classics and having charge of them".¹¹ Newman had discussed the idea with Darnell and intended

8. McClelland, 'A Catholic Eton', pp.6-12

9. While searching for a use for St Wilfrid's, Newman had wanted to aid the *ordo doctior, honestior, splendidior* with provision of an education "which they can get no where at present except at Protestant schools". (Newman to Coffin, 8 Jul 1849, *L&D* XIII, p.206)

10. John Hungerford Pollen (1820-1902) was the great-great-nephew of Pepys. After an education at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford he became a Fellow of Merton College. He came under the influence of the Tractarians and over the years became one of Newman's most devoted friends. Pollen was an Anglican curate at St Saviour's, Leeds but turned down the living at Kibworth of nearly £1000 p.a. in order to become a Catholic in 1852. Thereafter he devoted himself to art and architecture. In 1855 he became Professor of Fine Arts at the Catholic University and built the University Church. Pollen married in 1855, moved to London in 1857 and became private secretary to the Marquis of Ripon. He had a large family: two of his sons became Jesuits and one joined the Oratory.

11. From an account of a letter, Flanagan to Newman, Dec 1856, *L&D* XVII, p.479. Newman's initial proposal for a school at St Wilfrid's featured Coffin as Rector and Darnell as his assistant. Owing to

to raise the matter at a Congregation meeting.¹² While unsure of the plan, he advised Pollen as follows: that those interested in a "Catholic Eton should form themselves into a quasi trust with a certain sum of money at their disposal"; that they should keep a low profile on account of the "interests and jealousies of the existing Catholic Schools", which would be less formidable with the passage of time; that they should start with little boys, and after about five years decide on the question of a public school; that if Pollen could gather three or four trustees, "enough for the experiment", they could approach the Oratory without either side committing itself; that, if both sides were agreeable, the quasi trustees could take a nearby house and field, and install Mrs Wootten as "Guardian of the children".¹³

Newman's caution can easily be explained. Four years previously he had advised a convert friend about the difficulties involved in starting a boys' school at Clifton: Catholics were "so used to absurdly low prices" they would balk at proper fees; parents were "so wonderfully capricious" they were reluctant to commit themselves, and hard to rely on; the project would involve "a great outlay in the beginning", and run at a loss for a while. Another "great difficulty" lay in challenging "the Catholic monopoly — either *you* cannot succeed, or the *Colleges* cannot".

This will hinder your getting the *names* of people as patrons of your undertaking, who in their hearts feel how much good you would be doing and would rejoice in your scheme for its own sake — but they will say I cannot come into a project which will *break* this or that diocese.

Nevertheless, Newman thought there might be sufficient people who "*feel* the desideratum" to help establish it, and even share in the financial risk.¹⁴

Coffin's reluctance, Newman suggested Darnell take care of the boys instead, "for teaching is a *pleasure* to him, and his forte". (Newman to Coffin, 20 Oct 1849, *L&D* XIII, pp.272–3) In Newman's proposal for a college, Darnell was designated Prefect of Studies under Coffin as Rector. (Prospectus of St Wilfrid's, Feb 1850, *L&D* XIII, pp.420–1)

12. Meetings at the Birmingham Oratory were either General or Deputy Congregations.

13. Newman suggested Campden, Norfolk, Simeon and Pollen as possible trustees. (Newman to Pollen, 28 Jan 1857, *L&D* XVII, pp.510–11)

14. Newman to Thompson, 12 Jun 1853, *L&D* XV, pp.379–80. On account of the difficulties Thompson decided not to pursue his school plan.

Edward Healy Thompson (1813–91) was educated at Emmanuel College, Cambridge. After holding several curacies he became a Catholic in 1846. He was married and interested in literary pursuits.

In April 1857, just days after notifying the Irish bishops of his intention to resign the rectorship of the Catholic University the following November, Newman provided Simeon¹⁵ with an outline of the school plan. "Having set the University off", Newman suggested he could be "instrumental [...] in setting off another great Catholic desideratum, a public school". A "very modest beginning" was contemplated: the Oratory could start it, with Darnell as headmaster; the boys would be about nine years old, and under the care of a lady; after four or five years they would be of public-school age, and a change of plan could occur — the Oratory could then retire from the scheme. Newman resisted fleshing out the idea any further, as he was unsure "whether others will think such a project possible". He insisted: "You will be more able than I am to decide both on the idea itself and on the mode of carrying it out." He added that the Oratory had no wish to be involved in the financial arrangements or to receive any remuneration.¹⁶

This letter is significant. The outline of the ambitious plan was not conveyed with gushing enthusiasm in order to gain support: it was a tersely worded communication. It already countenanced great difficulties — attracting a sufficient numbers of boys and facing opposition — and it threw the initiative back to the recipient. There was no hint of enlisting support for a fully elaborated plan, while there was every indication of an invitation to tackle a project jointly: it was for Simeon and others to fill out the idea and to decide on the *modus operandi*.

Simeon's reply was a well-articulated expression of the longing for this "great Catholic desideratum". He felt it was "impossible for the Catholic body in England to elevate themselves into intellectual equality with their fellow Citizens" unless something was done to improve Catholic education. Until then, it was "vain and childish for us to complain of and grumble at the inferiority of our social position", and still more childish to try to make up for this deficiency "by a system of self exclusion". The mere accession of numbers which the converts were bringing to the Catholic body would have no effect,

15. Sir John Simeon of Swainston (1815–70) was educated at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford. He succeeded his father as 3rd baronet in 1854. He was the Liberal MP for the Isle of Wight from 1847 but resigned when he became a Catholic in 1851. His wife also converted. Apart from Newman, his friends included Manning, Jowett and Tennyson. In the 1860s his London house became a rendezvous for literary and political society. He was re-elected to Parliament in 1865 despite the fact that the Conservative candidate against him was supported by W.G. Ward who objected to the liberal tendency of Simeon's religious views.

16. Newman to Simeon, 17 Apr 1857, *L&D* XVIII, pp.16–17

unless they, the converts, were "ready and able to do something to meet this state of things". In fact, the effect would be prejudicial, in supplying more instances to illustrate "the popular theory of Catholic inferiority". The prospect of a new school was a "great consolation" to him on another score: it would enable his boys to "receive a training which might fit them to take their place hereafter in active life on a par with other educated Englishmen".¹⁷

Simeon enumerated what he considered to be the defects of the collegiate system: "Want of Manliness, want of completeness, want of definite purpose; and consequent want of influence on the future pursuits and character of the man". Against these defects he acknowledged its considerable strengths, above all "the inculcation of purity, and the consequent production of a high moral standard". However, this was "apparently purchased at the expense of many valuable qualities of manliness[,] energy and readiness to face the world". Simeon's ideal was eloquently summed up: "To my mind Eton, minus its wickedness, and plus the inculcation of the Catholic faith would be what I should best like to see".¹⁸

In common with other converts, Simeon wrestled with the problem of maintaining his Englishness at a time when the Catholic Church was regarded by the majority of his countrymen as intrinsically foreign. Simeon recognised his over-sensitivity, but confessed he distrusted "the disposition to denationalize the English Catholic, and to set up as a model for his imitation, some foreign type", which he regarded as "in every way inferior". The "Convert Element" had much to answer for in this respect, and it was on this account that he felt "a little dread" at the involvement of the Oratory in the school plan. (Simeon incorrectly assumed that the Italianate attitude of the London Oratory also typified the Birmingham Oratory.¹⁹) He felt uneasy about his boys being "encouraged to throw overboard their distinctive English character in favour of something which is by some people considered Catholic, simply because it is Antinational". Yet, Simeon

17. Simeon to Newman, 30 Apr 1857, BOA. This letter is one of the few used — and repeatedly — by Upton. (Upton, *op. cit.*, pp.5, 26–7, 33–5, 44, 63 & 79)

18. *Ibid.* Upton interprets the reference to unmanliness as a covert attack on the Catholic colleges. (Upton, *op. cit.*, pp.76–9)

19. St John to Newman, 5 May 1857, *L&D* XVIII, p.27n

declared, he was prepared to dismiss such fears if Newman's was to be "the presiding head, and the guiding hand". He agreed that the scheme would face many difficulties. The "attachment of many of the old Catholics for the particular Seminaries in which they have been educated" was thoroughly bigoted. Since this was particularly strong "among the Oscott men", it was not possible to do much with them, yet without them the idea of a large public school was impossible. It was an obstacle he could not see his way round.²⁰

Newman judged the reply "so little encouraging, that we have dropped the subject".²¹ He was shaken by the references to the supposed un-Englishness of the Oratory.²² For all his agreement as to the evident need for the plan, Simeon's response gave no pledge of active support. As Newman was not provided with the quality of response he required to move the scheme forward, the correspondence with Simeon was neither pursued nor begun with others.²³ The matter lay dormant until Bellasis took it up six months later, except for a separate exchange of letters with R. Ward.²⁴

Ward had already discussed the school plan with Newman. After receiving Simeon's letter Newman wrote to Ward to emphasise the need for the utmost discretion, above all in connecting his name with the plan. Ward revealed that he had confided in his brother, F.R. Ward,²⁵ who had shown great interest and compiled a list of those he thought likely to support the scheme. Because of the "peculiar difficulties" involved, R. Ward pointed out that the first question everyone would ask was, "Who could be found to carry the plan through?" He asked Newman to allow his brother to tell his friends "confidentially, that he had reason to think you would give such a plan your formal

20. Simeon to Newman, 30 Apr 1857, BOA. The prospect of competing with Oscott was daunting on two counts: its proximity — it was five miles from the Oratory; and its popularity among the upper classes — the great majority of its boys were lay pupils, unlike St Edmund's and Ushaw.

21. Newman to Bellasis, 28 Oct 1857, *L&D* XVIII, p.153

22. Newman to St John, 4 May 1857, *L&D* XVIII, p.27

23. Jackson infers from Simeon's letter that it was he who gathered together a group of influential Catholics to petition Newman to open a school. (J. Jackson, *op. cit.*, p.123)

24. Richard Ward (1813–69) studied at Oriel College, Oxford and was the first Vicar of St Saviour's, Leeds. He became a Catholic in 1851 and later a priest.

25. Francis Ridout Ward (1815–99) became a Catholic in 1851. He moved from Bristol to London, where he founded a firm of Catholic solicitors. He assisted Newman in legal matters. Both he and his wife were great friends of Newman and their two eldest boys attended the new school.

consideration if it was brought before you". F.R. Ward volunteered to send Newman his list before approaching those on it, and to say as much or as little as Newman wished.²⁶ Newman's reply does not appear to have survived, but, judging by the absence of any further activity, it may be assumed that it was more than cautious.

Newman's convert friends had a problem. The solution seemed straightforward — the establishment of a school matching the great public schools but informed with, and imbued by, the Catholic faith and morals — but they were searching for the means to bring it about. Newman was in a position to offer them more than advice: he was open to the possibility of collaborating with them. The offer to begin at the Oratory was an attractive proposition: Newman could oversee the foundation; Darnell was promising as a headmaster; Mrs Wootten could care for the young boys; the location of the Oratory, on the outskirts of Birmingham, was not inappropriate for a small boys' school, as the neighbourhood was "airy, high, covered with trees and gardens". However, it was foreseen that "Ultimately a school must be in the country" to provide the proper setting for a public school.²⁷ This implied a temporary connection with the Oratory, as the Rule stipulated they were city-based.

Bellasis seizes the initiative (October 1857 – January 1858)

In October 1857 Newman was approached by Bellasis who was anxious about the education of his eldest son, aged seven. His enquiry at the London Oratory, as to whether the Congregation planned a school, had been met with "so decided a negative that I turned my thoughts elsewhere". Since then he had met Pollen, who had encouraged him to contact Newman.²⁸ Newman's reply shows that his offer had been further refined: the Oratory had "opportunities" for beginning it which others had not; once set up, they could "gradually relinquish the task" to avoid "interfering with the existing interests of other

26. F.R. Ward had offered practical suggestions for the plan: it should be "started on a very small and unpretending scale", that being "the best, if not the only practicable way"; such a start would be much easier to finance and "less likely to give offence". (R. Ward to Newman, 9 May 1857, BOA)

27. Newman to Simeon, 17 Apr 1857, *L&D* XVIII, p.17

28. Richard Bellasis was being educated at home. His father was concerned that he had no companions other than his sisters and that his chief interest was the sacristy at church and serving Mass. He had searched in vain for a suitable preparatory school. (Bellasis to Newman, 26 Oct 1857, BOA)

schools"; as the Oratory was unable to help financially, the plan would require a considerable outlay; Mrs Wootten had agreed to act as a dame. He declared: "We will try to carry out any thing which others originate, but this is all we can promise, should our aid be desirable."²⁹ The response again appeared lukewarm but it reflected Newman's view that the responsibility to educate children lay, in the first instance, with parents: it was for them to take the initiative. His caution also stemmed from his preoccupation in discerning suitable works for the Oratory to engage in. Bellasis returned to the charge and, while heeding Newman's request not to air the scheme publicly, replied that he would sound out others about the possibility of providing the support he asked for.³⁰

The first four months of 1858 witnessed a considerable correspondence, reflecting commensurate activity. Bellasis's soundings resulted in a growing awareness among many influential Catholics of their common responsibility for educating their children, and this in turn led to addressing their common need. In January Allies³¹ and Ward met Newman about the scheme. Allies's concern was stated robustly: "without mincing words, there is not I suppose a convert of Oxford or Cambridge who is not forced into a feeling made up of despair and disgust at the condition of scientific [i.e. first-rate] teaching among us, compared with that existing in the best Protestant schools". An appreciation of some of the foreseen difficulties was overridden with fighting talk: "We know well enough the number and the weight of those who will be ready to thwart such a design, but if this school be the greatest want we have, ought it not to be attempted?"³² Newman reminded

29. Newman added that he and the other Fathers wished to be "of any service to yourself and other friends, in so very anxious and important a matter". (Newman to Bellasis, 28 Oct 1857, *L&D* XVIII, p.153)

30. Bellasis to Newman, 4 Nov 1857, BOA

31. Thomas William Allies (1813–1903) was educated at Eton and Wadham College, Oxford, where he was subsequently a Fellow for eight years. Like Bellasis and Hope-Scott he made a deep study of education on tours abroad. Allies came to conclude that the "terms of intimacy" between masters and pupils abroad, when compared to their complete separation in England, amounted to "a *generic* difference between Anglican and Roman Catholic education". (*Journal in France in 1845 and 1848, with letters from Italy in 1847, of things and persons concerning the Church and education*, London, 1849, pp.174 & 309) He was an Anglican clergyman until 1850 when he became a Catholic. He had been greatly influenced by Newman and became a lecturer in history at the Catholic University in 1855. Allies wrote the eight-volume work *The formation of Christendom*. He was Secretary of the Catholic Poor School Committee for the period 1853–90 and actively promoted Catholic elementary education. On account of this work he has been described as "the greatest of the Catholic lay leaders". (A.C.F. Beales, 'The struggle for the schools', *The English Catholics, 1850–1950*, p.372)

32. Allies remarked that F.R. Ward "would undergo any amount of labour" to coordinate the plan for a school. (Allies to Newman, 7 Jan 1858, BOA)

Allies of the difficulty of "acting against Oscott", and suggested winning over the bishop and "the Oscott people" by ensuring fees were sufficiently higher than Oscott's, to preclude competition.³³ Newman declared he would not launch into a scheme he could not see his way through.³⁴ It was another indication that Newman was wary of moving too quickly, and of displacing the initiative and know-how that parents could provide.³⁵

As the plan moved gradually into the public domain, Newman broached the topic with his bishop, Ullathorne,³⁶ only to find that he already knew of the scheme from his secretary, Estcourt,³⁷ who had just met Bellasis.³⁸ Bellasis had explained that he and others were concerned for the education of their sons. They were dissatisfied with arrangements at the colleges where the majority of the masters were *in statu pupillari*, and church and lay boys were mixed together. He revealed the plan afoot for remedying the situation, but admitted that fundamental difficulties were unresolved, in particular, the question of guaranteeing the school's religious dimension. He was convinced that the school should

33. In 1849 Newman had consulted the President of Oscott on how to avoid clashing with Oscott over the college at St Wilfrid's. The conditions Newman voluntarily accepted were exacting: only boys of 16 and above were to be admitted, and at fees not below £150. (Newman to Faber, 23 Dec 1849, *L&D* XIII, p.344) At Oscott fees for lay boys were 50 guineas for those under fifteen and 55 guineas for those above.

34. Newman to Allies, 8 Jan 1858, *L&D* XVIII, pp.224. Newman had previously considered the school plan for St Wilfrid's "a very serious move" which required much thought and prayer. (Newman to Faber, 23 Nov 1849, *L&D* XIII, p.304)

35. This interpretation is reinforced by Newman's response to a member of staff from the Catholic University who wrote suggesting that he keep up his links with the university by setting up an educational project in connection with it. In mentioning to Ornsby "*in strict confidence*" the anticipated meeting with Allies and F.R. Ward, Newman explained that "it is their matter not mine". Confidentiality was also needed as any premature notice of the plan would alarm the colleges, "whose authorities they would wish to reconcile to it, if possible". This repeated use of 'they' indicates who Newman judged to be responsible for the scheme. (Newman to Ornsby, 12 Jan 1858, *L&D* XVIII, p.228)

36. William Bernard Ullathorne (1806–89) was of old Catholic Yorkshire stock and descended from St Thomas More. He was educated at the village school before joining his father's draper's business at Pocklington, then becoming a cabin boy. At 16 he entered Downside and became a Benedictine. He taught at Ampleforth and Downside before working as Vicar-General in Australia. In 1846 he became Vicar Apostolic of the Western District and in 1848 transferred to the Central District. He became the first Bishop of Birmingham two years later. He occupied a middle ground between old Catholic values, Roman influences and the converts.

37. Edgar Edmund Estcourt (1816–84) was educated at Exeter College, Oxford where he was influenced by the Tractarian Movement. He worked as a clergyman at Cirencester before becoming a Catholic in 1845, and was ordained a priest in 1848. As well as Ullathorne's secretary, Estcourt was treasurer of the diocese.

38. Bellasis and Estcourt had exchanged views on education as Anglicans. In 1843 Bellasis had described to him his impressions of Catholic schools in Lancashire: the Christian Brothers had seemed to be "educated men far superior to our schoolmasters"; at Stonyhurst, a school for about 200 boys "of the better class of Roman Catholics", Bellasis had noted: "The discipline is perfect; strict, but not in the sense of severe." (Bellasis to Estcourt, 28 Oct 1843, Bellasis, *Memorials of Mr Serjeant Bellasis*, pp.35–6)

not be in lay hands, but under some ecclesiastical body, and had approached several parties, including Newman. Estcourt suggested he investigate whether, by solving the financial issue, one of the colleges could meet parents' wishes — separating church and lay boys, and reducing the proportion of ecclesiastical student-teachers. Any new school ought to be in ecclesiastical hands, but neither the Jesuits nor the Oratorians were the ones to carry it out successfully.³⁹

Estcourt alerted Ullathorne to what he considered to be an imminent crisis. The plan for "education of a higher character" and with equally good discipline would be a "very formidable rival" to the colleges. The higher fees would not be sufficient to prevent the idea catching on with other families, for it was clear that "these parties are determined that something shall be done". Estcourt considered that urgent action was required to meet their "valid objections" to the colleges. The chief difficulty was financial. Since there were insufficient priests to fill more of the teaching posts, he wondered if lay or married men might be considered as tutors; if not for church boys, then at least for the lay boys. Estcourt proposed adapting the scheme used at the proprietary schools to solve the financial problem.⁴⁰

Ullathorne's views on education were to set him apart from other church leaders.⁴¹ By nature disinclined to dirigiste strategies or monopolies of control, he looked

39. Estcourt to Ullathorne, 22 Jan 1858, BOA. B. Ward asserts that Capes was misinformed (in his article 'Catholic and Protestant collegiate education', *Rambler*, Dec 1848, pp.235–41) in claiming that the secular colleges depended on fee income from lay boys. He maintains that Oscott's bishop had funds at his disposal to pay for his church boys at the same rate as lay boys. (Ward, *The sequel to Catholic Emancipation II*, p.239) This does not square with the reasoning of Estcourt who, after all, was in command of the facts, as treasurer of the diocese. It is also contradicted by the English bishops who declared that "up to the present time the best part of the support of the Colleges has consisted of the pensions of the secular boarders". (Third Westminster Synod, 1859, *The Synods in English*, p.226)

40. Estcourt thought Oscott could engage three well-qualified men by increasing the pension from £52 10s to £63, allowing for a fall in numbers to 75. He put forward the example of the "flourishing Protestant College" at Marlborough where funds were raised by means of shares. The scheme, whereby in return for their money, shareholders had the right of nomination to places at the school, would require some adaptation. The funds would have to be invested permanently, "not removable by anyone", and there could be "no power of lay interference with the management". The shares could grant a right of nomination at the reduced pension of £52 10s. A sum of £350 would be the appropriate amount for such a perpetual right of nomination. However, "the nominator must have no control to prevent a boy being dismissed, except an appeal to the Bishop as Visitor." (Estcourt to Ullathorne, 22 Jan 1858, BOA)

41. He differed with Wiseman over the acceptance of government grants for Catholic schools, being the leader of the party arguing for independence. In 1870 he was opposed to the Education Act which Manning accepted.

sympathetically on the new initiative. He welcomed the school plan — "purely secular as to students, yet under clerical management" — as it would lead to the separation of schools from seminaries: "It would be just that wedge in the present system that is wanted." To attempt to graft the scheme onto Oscott, as Estcourt suggested, "would rivet on us the very system we want to get rid of".⁴² As the existing colleges were full to overflowing, there was room for another, but he anticipated it would take time to win over old Catholic families. He thought it ought to employ converts, but not for all the posts, for "moral management would require good Catholic experience, otherwise it will fail".⁴³ Far from disapproving of the scheme, "I should be the first to say to Dr Newman [...] you need have no fear of interfering with us".⁴⁴

The promoters meet (January – March 1858)

Bellasis organised a meeting in his chambers to discuss "a direct personal application to be made to Dr Newman respecting the establishment by him of an Upper Class Lay Catholic Boys' School in England".⁴⁵ It was the first of several promoters' meetings. The seven present⁴⁶ agreed that Bellasis should petition Newman to start the scheme and "move

42. Ullathorne contended that "the Church in England will not be in a normal state until the higher educational studies, at least, are conducted in seminaries exclusively devoted to ecclesiastical training". ('Draft letter to the Cardinal [Prefect of Propaganda] about the Decrees of the Third Synod of Westminster concerning the government of the English Colleges and Seminaries', n.d. [1859], Norman, *op. cit.*, pp.180–1)

43. Ullathorne had previously rejected the idea of a convert schoolmaster for the Catholic Middle School in Birmingham as he wished for someone "more used to old Catholic ways". (*L&D* XVI, p.175n)

44. Ullathorne anticipated it would be a long time before the venture affected the colleges, and that by then they would be ready for the competition. (Ullathorne to Estcourt, 24 Jan 1858, BOA) Nevertheless, Ullathorne's stance was a courageous one. Of the three secular colleges, Oscott was undoubtedly the least able to exist without lay boys.

45. Bellasis, *A contribution towards Oratory School annals: the year 1858*, p.1, BOA

46. Present were Allies, Bellasis, F. Capes, Dodsworth, Macmullen, F.R. Ward and Wegg-Prosser. Some of Upton's misconceptions arise from his assumption that all seven were old Etonians — only two were. (Upton, *op. cit.*, pp.33, 35 & 44)

Frederick Capes (1816–88) was educated at King's College, London. He became a Proctor in Doctor's Commons, the College of Doctors of Civil Law. On his conversion he had to relinquish an income of £1200–£1500 p.a. although he continued to practice as a solicitor in London.

William Dodsworth (1798–1861) studied at Trinity College, Cambridge and received Anglican Orders. His friendship with Newman began around 1838 and in 1850 he became a Catholic. Dodsworth had a large family and wrote books on Catholic apologetics.

it into maturity", on the assurance he was given the financial backing. They agreed the substance of a letter to him: that all thought the school necessary; that the plan ought to be formed "not upon the accidental views which a variety of persons might take but upon the mature deliberation of some one mind"; that Newman's "connection with the Catholic University, and interest [...] in the earlier education of youth" pointed him out as the one to whom they should apply; that they desired a lay school which combined "a vigorous intellectual training" with a "thoroughly Catholic atmosphere". If Newman agreed, the promoters wished to know three things: the initial sum required, the minimum number of boys to begin with, and the annual fees. Discussion then focused on how to raise the initial sum. Hope-Scott had submitted a plan which argued for a starting fund of £1000–£2000.⁴⁷ The consensus about fees was that they should not be too high, no higher than £70 p.a., and that they should be determined, "not by reference to what is paid at existing schools, but by what may prove to be required for its effectual support".⁴⁸ It was confirmed that the colleges were over-subscribed: Dodsworth related that 40 boys had been turned away the previous year from Downside, where he had a son.⁴⁹ News of Ullathorne's attitude was considered "an unexpected advantage".⁵⁰

Newman began to focus on practical problems: how to reconcile the access and availability of Mrs Wootten to the boys with Darnell's responsibility for them, given that

Richard Gell Macmullen (1814–95) was a Scholar and Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Oxford where he suffered for his Tractarian views. He went to St Saviour's, Leeds in 1846, became a Catholic in 1847 and was ordained a priest a year later. He served at St Mary's, Chelsea from 1856 to 1880.

Francis Richard Wegg-Prosser (1824–1911) was the only son of F. Haggit, Rector of Nuneham Courtenay and Prebendary of Durham. He changed his name in 1849 on inheriting his uncle's property at Belmont, Herefordshire. He was educated at Eton then Balliol College, Oxford where he took a First in Mathematics. He married the daughter of 2nd Earl Somers. An MP for Herefordshire from 1847 till 1852, he resigned on becoming a Catholic. His friendship with Newman dated from 1851. He built the church and monastery at Belmont for the English Benedictines and was a prominent member of the St Vincent de Paul Society.

47. At the meeting Bellasis pledged £100 and Ward £50.

48. Bellasis (on behalf of the promoters) to Newman, 30 Jan 1858, BOA

49. Stonyhurst was said to be "full to overflowing". (Trevor, *Light in winter*, p.178) Roberts attributes the increase in Stonyhurst's average entry numbers (from 52 p.a. during 1850–55 to 67 p.a. during 1856–60) to the influx of upper-class converts. (I.D. Roberts, *A harvest of hope: Jesuit collegiate education in England, 1794–1914*, St Louis, 1996, p.176)

50. Newman stressed the importance of finding another suitable "public school man" besides Darnell, since he was only being given to the school for four hours a day. Allies anticipated that they might begin with at least 20 boys, and he encouraged Newman to declare he would start by Easter. (Newman to Allies, 31 Jan 1858, L&D XX, p.241 & Allies to Newman, 1 Feb 1858, BOA)

priest and dame could not live together; and the wisdom of converting a local house. To resolve these difficulties, his proposal — which merely had the status of a "suggestion offered" by him to both parties, the promoters and the Oratory Fathers — entailed: taking boys at £70 p.a.; some of the Oratory Fathers engaging in the scheme for up to 20 years; an advance of £2000 for preparations. The Oratory House could take up to 50 boys, despite considerable inconvenience to the Fathers. He suggested building at once so as to be ready by December — the alternative was to rent a house nearby. The Oratory would gather a fair remuneration for accommodation offered, interest on money invested and £50 p.a. for the headmaster. He assumed "that I am to have the whole management of the undertaking".⁵¹

To the promoters, at their adjourned meeting,⁵² the proposed location of the school seemed to suggest that the whole Oratory was intending to drop other concerns and "turn schoolmasters".⁵³ This provoked disagreement. Great objections were raised to any connection with a religious order, particularly by Macmullen, who assumed that the masters would be unpaid and therefore Oratorians.⁵⁴ The promoters agreed that Newman's involvement was crucial for creating confidence in the infant establishment, but attaching the school to the Oratory was another matter: it was likely to "create great jealousy and dissatisfaction"; "it would tend sooner or later to confine the selection of teachers to that body and so cramp the advance of the school"; "what was wanted was an 'independent school'".⁵⁵

Newman's proposal appeared to frustrate their aspirations for a public school by introducing unnecessary constraints. However, they had to decide how the religious character was to be guaranteed. Bellasis argued that, "as all existing Catholic schools of

51. Newman's offer was to use the top storey of the Oratory House along with the adjoining playground and ball-court. Land adjoining the frontage of the property alongside the House could be used for a new school building containing school rooms, a dining room, kitchen, music room, a Father Prefect's room and possibly bedrooms. Quarters for a dame, the servants and an infirmary would be at the far end. (Newman to Bellasis, 2 Feb 1858, *L&D* XVIII, pp.242-4)

52. Those present on 3 February were Bellasis, Dodsworth, Macmullen, F.R. Ward and Wegg-Prosser.

53. Newman's memorandum, 9 Feb 1858, *L&D* XVIII, p.250

54. Bellasis to Hope-Scott, 5 & 11 Feb 1858, BOA

55. Bellasis to Newman, 5 Feb 1858, BOA

any note were connected either with Episcopal seminaries or religious bodies, an attempt, and that by converts, to establish a school independent of some known Ecclesiastical or religious foundation would create distrust". There would be no security for proper religious training if the school had to rely on such unoccupied priests as the bishop might be able to spare from his own clergy. The connection with the Oratory was a natural one and "would create that confidence in the religious element which an independent school might not have". The others took a different view. They wanted Newman to establish a school entirely under his control, for as long as he thought necessary, and then to "create such a trust for its continuance" as he thought best. A letter summarising all these doubts was prepared but not sent, pending reconsideration, and the meeting adjourned.⁵⁶

From the outset Bellasis was accepted by the promoters as their natural leader, and at no time during the foundational period does he appear to have lost their confidence. In these early stages he became a special focus for an interchange of aspirations, impressions and fears in the attempt to formulate a response to Newman's offer. Having a mastery of the cross-current of ideas among them, he was effectively entrusted with the task of securing the best deal for them. His objections were duly heeded, hence the adjournment. In fact most of the parents he had spoken to considered the school's connection with a religious body as essential: they were "disinclined to the idea of an independent school".⁵⁷

Acton, who heard of developments through Darnell, enthused about the plan which he considered a "necessary appendix to the University and to the project of a regular separate seminary for our ecclesiastical students: and it will be a great step towards emancipating Catholic lay education from protestant influence on the one hand and from the defects of our Colleges on the other". He only wished he had a small son to offer as a pledge of sympathy in the undertaking and confidence in its authors. He revealed that the Jesuits were contemplating a school of their own near London. As the only cradle

56. *Ibid.* Thirty years later Newman commented on Bellasis's isolation to his son. "Differences of view soon showed themselves between Sir John Acton with others, and my special friend, your dear Father". (Newman to Bellasis, 24 Jun 1887, *L&D* XXXI, p.216)

57. Bellasis's memorandum: statement of the Darnell trouble, n.d. [about 24 Dec 1862], BOA. Badeley assured Acton and Bellasis that it would be "nothing short of madness" to reject Newman's offer. (Badeley to Bellasis, 6 Feb 1858, BOA)

Catholic among the early promoters, and having been recently educated at Oscott, Acton's views were bound to be given a special hearing. He claimed that he and his contemporaries were like "specimens of the monstrous deficiency of the best education which is now accessible to Catholic lay boys in England". He accepted the invitation to join the dinner party Bellasis had organised to talk over the plan.⁵⁸

Acton anticipated that the real difficulties would not be of the material kind, but those arising "from the variety and division of opinions which at present characterise the Catholic body":

a lurking jealousy of converts, a more bold and rampant aversion to whatever is connected with the Dublin university, objections to the Oratorians, objections from some of the Oratorians themselves against everything that Newman does, and especially against such a presumed departure from the principles of the order, some annoyances, at first, from the existing colleges, etc. etc. all which I trust will not stand in the way of a successful beginning and a gradual progress which will be none the worse if it is slow at first.

This was an astonishingly accurate catalogue of the difficulties that lay ahead, yet Acton simply brushed them aside with the expectancy that they would all be overcome.⁵⁹ Nevertheless he realised that as the foundation had far-reaching consequences — reforming the whole collegiate system, and paving the way for the establishment of a Catholic university in England — it was likely to arouse much opposition.⁶⁰

Before their next meeting the promoters learnt that Newman had considered the plan primarily from the Oratory's point of view; not what was best in the abstract, but what was best between the alternative schemes if the Oratory was approached. The scheme was consistent with their work but it would remain one among several. Except for two Fathers, none was "addicted to teaching or qualified to govern the school", yet it had the advantage of connecting them with those they were charged to work with, as well as helping to fill vacant rooms. Newman thought the promoters should consider it from a

58. Acton to Bellasis, 2 Feb 1858, BOA

59. *Ibid.*

60. Acton to Döllinger, 17 Feb 1858, J.J.I. Döllinger, *Lord Acton briefwechsel, 1820-90 I*, ed. V. Conzemius, Munich, 1963, pp.126-7. In this letter he referred to opposition from the Jesuits and the enemies of the Oratory.

different perspective to see whether the Oratory's proposition suited their needs.⁶¹ The clarification had its effect. At the adjourned meeting⁶² the promoters agreed to withhold the letter describing their doubts. Despite lingering reservations they decided that Bellasis and Acton should visit Newman to talk over the plan. They also discussed the wider contribution it would make by raising Catholic educational standards and the possibility of it leading on to a Catholic university.

On account of the divergence of views among the promoters, Bellasis consulted Hope-Scott whom he had kept up-to-date with developments.⁶³ Hope-Scott's considered opinion was that Newman's plan was the best, except in one detail; Newman's suggestion that the "Gentlemen in London" should have the power to nominate boys to avoid finding himself in a difficult position as regards local Birmingham boys. Hope-Scott thought that, since Newman ought to have the power to expel, so he ought to have the sole power to admit. Regarding boys "of inferior rank or manners", Hope-Scott pointed out that the English public schools were open to all who could pay. A mixture of classes was advantageous, though he conceded that Birmingham "might pour an inconvenient number into the school". He recommended the standard remedy; to insist that those who lived within two or three miles could only be admitted as day-boys.⁶⁴

Hope-Scott emphasised two points: "1st that Newman's independence must be complete, 2nd that to have a good public school it must be in the true sense *public*". Against the latter, it could be argued that the expense of a public school put a check on too great an admixture of classes, yet this was not the case with public schools like Rugby. Though the new school would, for a while, be too small to bear a mixture of classes safely, he insisted that if the aim really was to have a public school then it should

61. F.R. Ward to Bellasis, 5 Feb 1858, BOA

62. On 6 February Acton, Allies, Bellasis, Macmullen, F.R. Ward and H. Wilberforce were present.

H. Wilberforce (1807–73) was the youngest son of the philanthropist. He was educated privately before entering Oriel College, Oxford in 1826. He gained a First in Classics and, on Newman's advice, took Orders rather than pursue a career in law. Wilberforce resigned from the rich living of East Farleigh, Kent to become a Catholic with his wife and children in 1850. After two years as secretary to the Catholic Defence Association he took up journalism. He became the owner and editor of the *Catholic Standard* which amalgamated with the *Weekly Register*.

63. Bellasis to Hope-Scott, 5 Feb 1858, BOA

64. Hope-Scott to Bellasis, 7 Feb 1858, BOA

be professed from the first. Any class limitation would meet with ill-will. The plan was already exposed to "another cause of *jealousy*" due to "the movement being one of Converts, and of Converts dissatisfied with the old Catholic Schools". In his opinion, "any exclusiveness in the nominations" would justly argue against the plan.⁶⁵

Bellasis and Acton met Newman to discuss the offer. There was full agreement, except that, while the two promoters considered that the next move was to collect names to back Newman, Newman wanted the President of Oscott and the cardinal to be informed and won over.⁶⁶ The two promoters were treated to a crucial distinction affecting Newman's involvement: he was "freer to advise than to act" because he could "advise abstractedly" but "must act as an Oratorian". This meant that he could say in the abstract that his proposal seemed the best possible — that the school begin under the care of the Oratory "till it gained such strength and consistency as will enable it to dispense with such protection" — yet, as an Oratorian, he had to declare that the Oratory would be unable to supply masters and ushers. It could only give general "superintendence, a Father prefect for a time, and spiritual care". The closer the school was, "the greater the service the Oratory could be to it", hence the suggestion that it be placed on Oratory ground. However, once it had increased beyond a certain number it could no longer be under the Oratory, as space was limited. The scheme was to be like other Oratorian ones, with a Father or two giving a certain amount of time.⁶⁷

Before leaving Birmingham, Acton and Bellasis showed St John and Darnell the letter the promoters had intended to send. After their departure Newman was informed of it. Newman agonized over his next move. He surmised that if the promoters had only been won over to the proposal during their last meeting there was no guarantee they would not, "after the first excitement", change their minds again. All the problems

65. *Ibid.*

66. Newman had written to both about St Wilfrid's in 1849. He had sought Wiseman's judgement on three matters: whether the plan would interfere with the system of Catholic colleges, "pursuing as we do the *University and public School* system"; whether he could help in finding pupils; and what his general views on the plan were. (Newman to Faber, 23 Nov 1849, *L&D* XIII, pp.304–5)

67. Newman "had a clear view that it was as little out of the way to take charge of a rich school than of a poor, and that this plan might be entered into by the Oratory, if Reformatories might, and ragged schools, and guilds". (Newman's memorandum given to Acton and Bellasis, 8 Feb 1858, BOA; Newman's memorandum, 9 Feb 1858, *L&D* XVIII, p.251)

relating to this scenario flooded into Newman's cautious and sensitive mind: the perception by others that he was bent on filling Oratory rooms to provide income; gossip from the London Oratory; explanations that might be required of him at Rome!⁶⁸

Newman withdrew his proposal, and the indirect pledge to present it to the Fathers, on account of the additional information gleaned. Assuring Bellasis of his total readiness to cooperate, he explained in a sensitively worded letter: "I am afraid of going too fast in a delicate matter".⁶⁹ It was the expression of his keen awareness of the perceived imbalance in commitment of the interested parties. At their next meeting⁷⁰ the promoters agreed that their assent to the initial proposal had been wholehearted once the connection with the Oratory was fully appreciated. They acknowledged Newman's hesitation over asking the Fathers to commit themselves to a plan for "persons less anxious" than anticipated. Without making further use of Newman's original offer, they decided to gather support for the application to Newman, before communicating with bishops and others.⁷¹ They drew up a list of important Catholics for this purpose.⁷² The question of the school's relationship with the Oratory was left unresolved.

Up to this point the plan had been dominated by converts. The six individuals who

68. Newman's memorandum, 9 Feb 1858, *L&D* XVIII, p.251

69. Newman to Bellasis, 9 Feb 1858, *L&D* XVIII, p.251

70. Acton, Bellasis, Dodsworth, Rock and Wilberforce were present on 10 February.

Daniel Rock (1790–1871) was ordained a priest after being educated at St Edmund's and the English College, Rome. He was chaplain at Alton Towers from 1827 to 1840 and became a canon at Southwark Cathedral. He published religious and archaeological works.

71. Bellasis to Newman, 11 Feb 1858, BOA. Rather than sending identical letters they worked from an outline. It ran: "An application has lately been made to Dr Newman to establish a first class Boys' School in England, and he has expressed his willingness to undertake it having long had the subject under consideration. Before anything is done however it will be desirable to communicate with the Cardinal and others and to be able to show that the application to Dr Newman has the concurrence of persons whose opinions are entitled to consideration." ('Memorandum on the proposed new Catholic school for boys', n.d., BOA)

72. The second of two versions of the list, in Bellasis's hand, at the end of his address book (BOA) runs as follows: "Sir Robert Throckmorton, Robert Monteith, Robert Berkeley by Sir J. Acton; Lord Feilding, W.G. Ward, Lord Campden, W. Maskell by W. Dodsworth; Philip Howard by Dr Rock; Lord Edward Howard by E. Badeley; C. Langdale, Col Vaughan by Dr Manning; Lord Charles Thynne by F. Ward; Lord Petre, Biddulph Phillips, Weld Blundell, Herbert of Llanarth, Sir John Simeon, Scott Murray by Serjeant Bellasis; Duke of Norfolk, Lord H. Kerr, Rich Gerard of Rochioles by Hope-Scott." The first version differs in having "Herbert Vaughan for Col V" instead of "Col Vaughan" and gives the name of [H.] Wilberforce as one of the promoters but without assigning any names to him.

had initially approached Newman were all converts. Of the ten who had attended the promoters' meetings, eight were converts. Of the nine who were to gather support for the plan, seven were converts. (Manning's name was among these — evidently the promoters considered they could count on his support.⁷³) Now the intention was to widen the base by asking prominent Catholics — eleven converts and ten old Catholics — to give public support.

Satisfied with the promoters' response, Newman changed his proposal from a "suggested plan at present withdrawn" to one that could now be "made use of". His amended proposal was weakened by growing doubts about gaining the unanimous consent of the Fathers on "a matter so nearly affecting the comfort of individuals". By way of consolidation, Newman urged Bellasis to get others "to consider *what they propose to themselves to gain*, over existing schools — else, the door is left open to much disappointment".⁷⁴ It was common-sense advice. Genuine assent to his plan could only come after due consideration. Having tempered the initial excitement, the pace had been slowed down and the uptake again put back into the hands of his friends.

In response to Newman's exhortation that the promoters examine their motives, Bellasis noted down:

Four reasons [for a new school]

1. care of their persons
2. intellectual culture
3. select class of boys
4. division of eccles[iastical] and lay, and thereby better masters.

The reasons were interconnected but hinged on the separation of lay and church boys: once achieved, the other advantages would follow. Bellasis also jotted down four "hypothetical causes" for securing "intellectual culture":

1. getting by heart and learning Latin verses
2. keeping to nothing but Latin and Greek
3. but good teachers
4. trad[itional] teaching.⁷⁵

73. Newman also appears to have counted on his assistance. In the autumn of 1858 Manning was asked to help find a suitable second master for the school, but he told Newman he was unable to. (Newman to Bellasis, 21 Dec 1858, *L&D* XVIII, p.552)

74. Newman to Bellasis, 12 Feb 1858, *L&D* XVIII, pp.252–3

75. Bellasis's memorandum, 12 Feb 1858, BOA

While not wishing to fault the colleges on religious matters or "the kindness with which the boys in them were treated", they had obvious deficiencies which the promoters recognised:

- (1) that the classical instruction might be improved and made more conformable in degree to that of the highest Protestant schools;
- (2) that in the existing schools there was too great an admixture of classes, many of the scholars coming from homely dwellings, bringing with them provincialisms, not to say vulgarities, which were, perhaps, in great measure, got rid of by associating with their school-fellows, but at the cost of leaving a portion of them behind;
- (3) that the charge for education was not sufficient to ensure really competent masters, who were, in general, divines, themselves in course of education, and only temporarily occupied as teachers, having in many cases no taste for teaching, and, if possessed of any talent, certain to be carried off to more important duties;
- (4) that it was desirable that a little more attention should be paid to the *personnel* of the boys, and it was also thought that lay-brothers were hardly adequate to the charge of little boys just come from home.⁷⁶

McClelland asserts that (1) and (2) were culled from Capes's *Rambler* articles.⁷⁷ He selects (2) to affirm that Bellasis "postulated this view as the chief reason which led to the foundation of the Oratory School".⁷⁸ Neither the immediate context nor any of the promoters' other deliberations supports this claim. McClelland interprets the references in (3) and (4) as criticisms of Stonyhurst.⁷⁹ However, it is inappropriate to refer to Bellasis's observations as criticisms, since there was a definite absence of critical spirit in his analysis of the shortcomings of the colleges, in marked contrast to the strong language used by others.⁸⁰

76. Bellasis, *Memorials of Mr Serjeant Bellasis*, pp.193-4, quoted from Bellasis's MS *Autobiography*

77. McClelland, 'Tractarian intellectualism and the silent heritage: 1840-50', *Oscott College, 1838-1988: a volume of commemorative essays*, ed. J.F. Champ, privately printed, 1988, p.90

78. McClelland, 'The Kensington scheme: a reply', *Month XXXIII*, 1965, p.179; *A Catholic Eton*, p.4

79. McClelland, *A Catholic Eton*, p.7

80. Bellasis was cautious to the extreme in all that referred to the defects of other people and he urged others to do likewise. In 1853 he advised a daughter: "Avoid a critical spirit; in other words, do not find fault with individuals or things. There are few things which will not admit of criticism, but remember, a critical spirit is often ill-natured and indicative of a common-place understanding." (Bellasis, *Memorials of Mr Serjeant Bellasis*, p.169) In 1861 he counselled his eldest daughter who was about to travel: "Avoid all stories about Catholics that might be repeated and misapprehended; for instance, say nothing against Catholic schools, although we know they may have some faults." (*Ibid.*, p.172) On another occasion he chided a friend who had made critical observations: "If you really knew the life led by Catholic priests and schoolmasters in London, how hard they lie, how poorly they are clad, and how scantily they eat; and again, if you knew the extent to which Catholics, who have the means, habitually contribute to their unaided charities and schools, you would not require an answer to your question, 'How is it the children are so

A separate seven-point memorandum enumerated the aims of the promoters: "a first rate classical school" where the "religious element" would be secured by the Oratorian connection: a school for lay boys only, "somewhat more select as to the class of boys" than some of the colleges; acceptance of 7–12 year-olds, providing for them "proper female care and attention"; special attention to habits of dress and cleanliness; the best possible masters, whether lay or clerical; everything to be "superintended" by Newman; the cost to be more than the colleges, at about £70 p.a.⁸¹

Gathering support for the plan

With the decision to solicit backing from a wider circle, the scheme moved into the public domain. No doubt the proposals were discussed at length in educated Catholic circles up and down the land. A radically different type of school was being proposed, prompting people to reconsider their assumptions. In attempting to gather support, the promoters inspired a debate on the perceived strengths and shortcomings of the colleges. Forceful and cogently argued responses identified and explored the weaknesses of their scheme. In the process, important educational principles were expressed. For the promoters, the exercise had the effect of a survey; for later historians, it sheds light on how parents and others viewed schooling at the time. No doubt the promoters tailored their arguments to suit those they were writing to. Only one example of a promoter's letter has survived, from Bellasis to Weld Blundell. In it Bellasis made much of (3) but omitted (4).⁸²

The response from converts was predictably favourable. Campden⁸³ gave his cordial approval, but on the express understanding that he was not committing himself

neglected?" (Bellasis to a friend, 9 Jan 1852, *ibid.*, p.173n)

81. 'Memorandum respecting the proposed School at Edgbaston' [in Bellasis's hand], n.d., BOA. It was used almost verbatim in Bellasis to Monteith, 27 Jun 1858, BOA.

82. He argued that there was a great need for "carefully selected masters, properly recommended and dedicated exclusively to the task". Many such men were available. (Bellasis to Weld Blundell, 13 Mar 1858, BOA)

83. Charles George Noel Campden (1818–81) became the second Earl of Gainsborough and married a daughter of the 16th Earl of Erroll. He was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge. He and his wife became Catholics in 1851 and often called on Newman at the Oratory. Darnell stayed with him for two months in 1856.

further. Feilding⁸⁴ was more wholehearted and declared that the planned school had "long been a great desideratum, as existing [schools] leave much to be desired".⁸⁵ Expressed in typically strong fashion, W.G. Ward's criticism of the religious instruction at the colleges reflected his high-minded aspirations. He declared there was not one "of our present English colleges or schools to which I could dream of sending my son". He thought "every one of them as bad as bad can be; and that the religious education is almost as low as the intellectual; though such a feat might seem almost impossible". His one doubt about the proposal was whether Newman "would give sufficient prominence to definite religious *teaching, instruction*, in fact *theology*, as distinct from *training*".⁸⁶

Simeon gave his name unhesitatingly in aid of "a higher[,] more complete[,] more rigorous[,] more intellectual and more extended education" than he believed existed in the colleges. He and a friend had "often mourned over the educational advantages forfeited by converts", but he was pessimistic. He feared there would be no

general movement as will secure the advantage of a large public school. Old Catholics from old associations, from the habit of being satisfied with the education forced on them by circumstances, and from their long acceptance of a cheap and short and therefore necessarily imperfect education will see no necessity for a change.

He predicted that some of the converts would take the same view. Most of the clergy would too, having been educated at the colleges. "And the Bishops with all this pressure upon them, added to the financial necessity" of maintaining the colleges, which would become unviable "if a really good school on a large scale were established, [...] will be in their hearts opposed to the plan, whatever they may say". He predicted that the experiment would begin with as few as a dozen sons of those "giving a security for gentlemanlike habits and ideas".⁸⁷

84. Rudolph William Basil Feilding (1823–92) was educated at Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge. He and his wife became Catholics in 1850. After her death he married the daughter of R. Berkeley, an old Catholic. As treasurer of Peter's Pence Association and one of the founders of the *Universe* in 1860, he was a prominent Catholic. He succeeded his father as eighth Earl of Denbigh in 1865.

85. Feilding to Dodsworth, 18 Feb 1858, BOA

86. He had misgivings "as to the effect of any really high intellectual education, unless the truths of revelation are also imparted in a most distinctly intellectual shape". (W.G. Ward to Dodsworth, 15 Feb 1858, BOA)

87. Simeon to Bellasis, 15 Feb 1858, BOA. The friend he referred to was Gaisford who later became an active promoter.

The wealthy convert Scott-Murray⁸⁸ told Bellasis he had "long felt the want of the sort of school you speak of" and hoped that Newman might be "induced to inaugurate" one. Unhappy with all school provision, his sons, aged ten and eleven, were kept at home but the disadvantages were becoming apparent. They would join the new school provided it was situated in the country, though he supposed this was unlikely to happen. (This strong preference for a rural setting resurfaced later and was a contributory factor to the Darnell crisis.) He offered to gain the support of others.⁸⁹

Some of the converts contacted were unconvinced by the plan. Monteith⁹⁰ told Acton he would support it despite uncertainty about the provision for formation in human virtue, particularly "the point of honour". He suggested it could be inculcated by "the performance of a sort of informal vow of Perfection in certain branches of conduct in which Perfection is by no means difficult". It was generally accepted that a gentleman abhorred "small lies — any thing approaching to grossness of eating — dirtiness of person — dirty talk (I do not mean impure — *that*, of course)". Yet Catholics seemed confident "that considerable imperfection in these things was a topic about which Religion has no voice with which to speak to them": to his list he added "needless cruelty to animals". Monteith wondered if Newman could do something to bring religion to bear on such points, "and thus sanctify the instinct that is in man [...] yet without exaggerating?" Still, he doubted "whether mischief can be kept out of a school without some amount of espionage on the part of the masters". Unless he felt sure the new school showed the same "alertness and sleepless care" as Stonyhurst, he would not send a son. To obtain this security, he was prepared to tolerate all the imperfections of the colleges.⁹¹

88. Charles Robert Scott-Murray (1818–82) was educated at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford. He inherited a large fortune and was MP for Buckinghamshire 1841–44. He became a Catholic in Rome in 1844 and married a cradle Catholic, the daughter of the 14th Lord Lovat. Scott-Murray later became High Sheriff for Buckinghamshire. The Pugin church and the school at Marlow were built and endowed by him at a cost of £6500. (P. Taylor, *The history of St Peter's Church, Marlow*, privately printed, 1996, pp.6–7, 9, 15 & 19)

89. He volunteered to ask his father-in-law, Lord Lovat, and Sir Piers Mostyn who had a son at Oscott. (Scott-Murray to Bellasis, 20 Feb 1858, BOA)

90. Robert Monteith (1812–84) was the only son of a rich Glasgow cotton merchant. He was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge where he became a friend of Tennyson. He called on Newman at Littlemore in 1844 and became a Catholic two years later. After marrying in 1845 he succeeded to his father's estate at Lanark in 1848. He gave large benefactions to the Church in Scotland.

91. Monteith to Bellasis, 22 Apr 1858, BOA

In a second letter Monteith returned to the "troublesome" subject which Bellasis had avoided in his reply, "viz, the imitation of the Jesuits, so far as possible, in all the devices suggested to them by experience for the guarding of morals". He considered it "impossible for wise men commencing such an enterprise not carefully to investigate these devices, and not to copy, except where a positive objection can be alleged. I am for 'espionage', except in the sense of any *unworthy* employment of boys as spies on each other." He declared he would await the "marked success" of the venture before deciding on a school for his sons, but promised £100 on condition that the promoters "enter into this matter — learn what is done (e.g. at Stonyhurst) — and only decline to imitate on well considered grounds".⁹² Bellasis was alive to the issue. The paper containing his four reasons for a new school also included the phrases "whether flogging" and "whether surveillance in bed rooms".⁹³ There are two reasons why he might have held back from discussion of the matter with Monteith: a reluctance to pronounce on behalf of the promoters, and a conviction that it was Newman's prerogative to decide.

The most negative response came from Maskell⁹⁴ who thought the plan had little chance of working: the educational need for youths aged 16–19 was greater, but he doubted whether the masters or pupils could be found for this either; he was unconvinced about a school under the Oratorians, and declared he would rather send a son to Oscott or Ushaw; Newman's "experiment in Ireland" had been a failure.⁹⁵

Herbert⁹⁶ was one of the old Catholics who welcomed the plan. He promised his three boys when old enough. Recollections of "an infinitesimal dose of *learning* drilled into me at Prior Park" convinced him that a school was much wanted to which there was "no admission *on cheap terms* for boys who imagine they have a *vocation* or whose parents have a wish to get education for nothing. If all the boys paid alike the teachers

92. Monteith to Bellasis, 30 Jun 1858, BOA

93. Bellasis's memorandum, 12 Feb 1858, BOA

94. William Maskell (1814–90) studied at University College, Oxford. He was a high churchman who became chaplain to the Bishop of Exeter and a renowned ecclesiastical historian. In 1850 he became a Catholic and devoted himself to literature and his medieval collections.

95. Maskell to Dodsworth, 28 Feb 1858, BOA

96. John Arthur Herbert, also known as Herbert of Llanarth, was married to the daughter of Lord Llanover, a convert.

could then have sufficient remuneration which is not the case at most Catholic schools." He recognised that the undertaking would "depart from the example set by the Catholic establishment".⁹⁷ The support of Norfolk⁹⁸ was regarded as critical as "it would smooth the way with the Cardinal, and with many old Catholics". He offered £50, but Bellasis was unsure whether this indicated his concurrence with the plan.⁹⁹ Hope-Scott considered the promise of money "sufficient evidence of support",¹⁰⁰ so his name did appear on the list of supporters. Throckmorton¹⁰¹ and Berkeley¹⁰² also replied in the affirmative.

Bellasis received support for his insistence on the school's Oratorian connection from Petre¹⁰³ who had, on request, been shown the correspondence between the promoters and Newman. Petre asserted that the only chance of permanent success lay "in immediate and intimate" connection with the Oratory. The school would undoubtedly be all that was wished for so long as Newman was at its head, but thereafter Petre feared it was possible it might lose that "thoroughly religious spirit" which all wished to maintain in Catholic educational establishments. As even a partial connection with the Oratory seemed uncertain, he had doubts about the success of any alternative plan.¹⁰⁴

It was Weld Blundell,¹⁰⁵ an old Catholic with close Stonyhurst connections, who provided the promoters with the most convincing case for preserving the college system. He told Bellasis he stood by three educational principles: that "a boy is, generally

97. Herbert to Bellasis, 14 Feb 1858, BOA

98. Henry Granville Fitzalan Howard (1815–60), the Earl of Arundel, became the 14th Duke of Norfolk in 1856. He returned to the Catholic Church and became a staunch defender of it. His wife became a Catholic in 1850. Known as a pious and generous layman, he was MP for Arundel from 1837.

99. Bellasis to Hope-Scott, 11 Feb 1858, BOA

100. Hope-Scott to Bellasis, 3 Mar 1858, BOA

101. Robert Throckmorton (1800–62) was the 8th baronet and of old Catholic stock. He married an aunt of Acton and was MP for Berkshire for 1831–34.

102. Robert Berkeley (1823–97) of Spetchley Park was the heir of an old Catholic family.

103. William Bernard Petre (1817–84), the 12th Baron Petre, was educated at Oscott and St Edmund's. The Petre family was one of the most distinguished and wealthy old Catholic dynasties.

104. Petre to Bellasis, 27 Feb 1858, BOA. Bellasis had acted very successfully as counsel for Petre in 1836 against the Eastern Counties Railways. (Bellasis, *Memorials of Mr Serjeant Bellasis*, pp.10–11)

105. Thomas Weld Blundell (1808–87), the second son of J. Weld of Lulworth Castle, was educated at Stonyhurst. On acquiring the Ince-Blundell estates by bequest he assumed the name Blundell. He became sheriff of Lancashire.

speaking, better at home under the eyes of his Parents than at a Public school, until he is 11 or 12 years old"; that however much knowledge a boy acquired by the age of 15, "the system by which his intellectual and moral faculties are trained and developed is of far greater importance"; and that this system is best carried out in a school with at least 100 students — a public school. Weld Blundell spoke for many when he claimed that the ecclesiastical element in the colleges was "of the highest importance" in "tending to the moral and religious benefits of the scholars".¹⁰⁶ The lay boy would suffer considerably from any separation. The young ecclesiastics, usually older and more mature, invariably provided him with "an example of assiduity, earnestness of purpose and religious feeling, which cannot fail to exert an advantageous influence on his mind and character". Friendships begun at the colleges often led later on to "the return of many to the paths of virtue".¹⁰⁷ (The atmosphere Weld referred to was diametrically opposed to the "principal controlling force" at the Protestant public schools which Chichester described as "a rough public opinion, the product of boyish minds".¹⁰⁸)

Weld was forthright in his estimation of Newman. He considered him "a man singularly qualified to create a new establishment for Catholic Education", yet, despite Newman's involvement and that of others he admired, he declined to provide "active cooperation". "Confidence is a plant of slow growth", and he had many difficulties "in Dr Newman's way". He preferred to wait and see. He remarked: "The difficulty that he will have to contend with, in selecting and marshalling a staff of teachers and managers, would I should think daunt a man of the strongest resolution". He conceded that Newman probably knew suitable people, particularly among "the learned and pious converts who have been left without any means of subsistence". Weld Blundell challenged the promoters' view that the college teachers were below par: in his opinion the teaching at Stonyhurst was very good. However, this was of secondary importance. The primary aim of a public school was how best to train the moral and intellectual faculties; "how they

106. Weld Blundell to Bellasis, 17 Mar 1858, BOA

107. Weld Blundell to Bellasis, 24 Mar 1858, BOA. One of the three arguments for shared education given by the English bishops in 1859 was the absence of alternatives for the upper-class laity. They added that it was fitting that future lay leaders were educated under the eye of the bishops, and that many heads of families were grateful for the benefits deriving from the shared education their sons received. (Third Westminster Synod, 1859, *The Synods in English*, p.227)

108. Chichester, *op. cit.*, pp.34-5

can be best developed and fitted for what is to be demanded of them hereafter". The system of teaching at Stonyhurst had been "founded principally on a foreign model and I believe it to be very effective and useful".¹⁰⁹

The replies the promoters received reflected the heterogeneity of Catholic opinion about their own educational system. It was natural that, with the prospect of significant restructuring, some reacted by dwelling on its defects and weaknesses, while others expressed alarm at the risk of forfeiting its recognised advantages. The correspondence confirms that there was considerable dissatisfaction with the general condition of Catholic education, not only among the converts, but also among the hereditary Catholics. However, there was uncertainty over how best to maintain proper discipline and guarantee moral and religious education, as they attempted to anticipate the outcome of establishing a new type of Catholic school. The one factor which all were agreed upon was that the undertaking would be immensely difficult to carry out.

Before the next promoters' meeting Bellasis was in a position to show Cardinal Wiseman that 32 prominent Catholics supported the scheme.¹¹⁰ The list supplies further data from which to assess the origin of support: three-quarters were converts.¹¹¹ The extent of support varied considerably. Some had merely agreed to grant their concurrence. Others, mainly the converts, were strongly supportive. Seven of the 21 names on the promoters' original list were missing, six of whom were old Catholics.¹¹² Nine new names

109. From his acquaintance with Stonyhurst he considered the Classics teachers "well qualified for the performance of their duties". The staff were "very carefully selected" and, while those teaching lower forms were sometimes as young as 22–23, those teaching the top classes, Poetry and Rhetoric, were first-rate and the best to be found in the Society. (Weld Blundell to Bellasis, 24 Mar 1858, BOA)

110. Those who "expressed their concurrence in the proposal for a new Catholic school in England" were: the Duke of Norfolk, Viscount Campden, Viscount Feilding, Lord C. Thynne, Lord H. Kerr, Sir R.T. Gerard, Sir R. Throckmorton, Sir J. Acton, Sir J. Simeon, Rt Hon. W. Monsell, S. de Vere MP, E. Jerningham, R. Berkeley, E. Badeley, J. Herbert, R. Monteith, J. Hope-Scott QC, C. Scott-Murray, R. Biddulph Phillips, W. Dodsworth, Serjeant Bellasis, W. Jones, H. Wilberforce, W. Bagshawe, F. Wegg-Prosser, R. Ward, W. Ward, S. Nasmyth Stokes, T. Allies, H. Bowden, and T. Marshall. T. Gaisford's name was added later. (Draft letter to Wiseman — part of memorandum in Bellasis's hand, 'Hope-Scott Q.C. Proposed answers to the Interrogatories of his Eminence Card. Wiseman', Mar 1858, BOA.)

111. Of the 32 names, eight were those of old Catholics and 24 of converts. Four promoters were left out — three converts (F. Capes, Macmullen & F.R. Ward) and an old Catholic (Rock) — presumably because they were insufficiently 'prominent', or, in the case of Capes, because of his liberal Catholic associations.

112. The old Catholics were E. Howard, P. Howard, Langdale, Petre, Vaughan and Weld-Blundell. The convert was Maskell. It is doubtful whether the two allotted to Manning — Langdale and Vaughan — were contacted. Despite Petre's lukewarm response and Maskell's negative attitude, Bellasis told Newman that

were added — four old Catholics and five converts.

The cardinal's questionnaire

Acton and Bellasis followed Newman's advice, and informed Wiseman of the school plan before gathering support.¹¹³ Wiseman was non-committal, but afterwards sent them a questionnaire.¹¹⁴ It contained 41 questions for the promoters to answer.¹¹⁵ Bellasis sent a brief reply outlining the plan.¹¹⁶ In response, Wiseman withdrew the questionnaire, but by then Newman had drafted answers, Hope-Scott had refined them and the promoters had discussed the results. The incident sheds more light on the foundation.

The questionnaire enquired into all aspects of the proposed school: about the head — whether he would be a layman or priest, who would nominate him and how, and for what reasons he could be dismissed; the teaching staff — whether they would all be laymen or whether some clerics; religious instruction — the "permanent arrangement", given that the Oratorian Fathers would only undertake the spiritual care for a time; spiritual directors — the relation between them and the head, whether they would be able to carry out their duties without interference, who would appoint them and who could remove them: the age of admission of boys and whether there would be any guarantee for their morality; general management — the ownership of the property, the power of the trustees and provisions for the disposal of the assets in the event of the plan failing. The

the promoters had received "many answers, all of them favourable". (Bellasis to Newman, 6 Mar 1858, BOA)

113. Newman had been unwilling to write to the cardinal himself because he felt he was owed an important reply from him. He had been approached about the project to translate the Bible, had made a start but then heard no more about it — and never did!

114. Bellasis to Newman, 6 Mar 1858, BOA. The promoters hoped that Manning would also speak to Wiseman about the plan.

115. Having spent 30 years in a college and passed through every stage of its life, Wiseman declared he was in an unrivalled position for proposing "the necessary questions to be seriously considered in founding any Institution for education". He suggested that those they were unable to answer would help them decide those matters which were necessary for the plan to be complete and invite confidence. (Wiseman to Bellasis, 5 Mar 1858, BOA) For the questionnaire, see 'Questions on the subject of the proposed lay-school at or near Birmingham', *L&D* XVIII, pp.284–7.

116. He enclosed copies of the important communications between Newman and the promoters. The three documents were: Bellasis (on behalf of the promoters) to Newman, 30 Jan 1858; Newman to Bellasis, 2 Feb 1858; Newman's memorandum, 8 Feb 1858. (Bellasis to Wiseman, 6 Mar 1858, BOA)

questions clearly assumed the structure of a college, not a school, referring to the discipline of rising, prayers and common duties of masters as well as boys, the regulation of spiritual reading of the boys, and the scheme for covering the philosophical course.¹¹⁷

Newman answered on behalf of the Oratory. The headmaster was to be a secular priest, not a layman, "because in the public schools in England, his being a clergyman is in many ways a gain and that, for office as such".¹¹⁸ Only he would be required to live in. The other masters could be either laymen or ecclesiastics. The two offices of teaching and maintaining discipline would be considered distinct, though in practice they could be "accidentally united". College disciplinary procedures were to be followed, "except with those changes which are implied in the idea of school". The replies to several questions were in a similar vein, indicating a different regime "inasmuch as a school is different from a College". Forms were to be operated rather than classes, and Classics was to be the main subject taught.¹¹⁹

Hope-Scott expanded and amended these answers on behalf of the promoters. He clarified that the headmaster would be appointed by the Oratorians and be "removable by them, and, of course, also by any other authority having jurisdiction over secular Priests". He would have no salary except, say, £50 for "incidental purposes". The criteria for appointment of staff would not be lay or clerical status but "the capacity and power of teaching", the aim being to obtain the best available talent by offering suitable remuneration. Newman's assertion that masters would enforce discipline over the boys during school hours was extended to include the eventuality of boys residing in masters' houses. As for internal discipline, the school would not substantially differ from the colleges: in some respects it would be more strict, and in other respects less so. It would be preserved "in the usual manner, by the birch". The extent of modern language teaching would depend "on the wish of the Parents". Newman's proposal that boys be admitted at

117. 'Questions on the subject of the proposed lay-school at or near Birmingham', *L&D* XVIII, pp.284-7

118. This preference reflected the arrangements at the public schools where headmasters continued to be clergymen until this century. The first laymen to be appointed as heads were at schools predominantly for day-boys, such as St Paul's in 1877. The turning point for boarding schools came with the first lay head at Marlborough in 1903, but Eton and Winchester were among the last to change; in 1933 and 1935 respectively. (J.R.de S. Honey, *Tom Brown's universe: the development of the Victorian public school*, London, 1977, pp.308-13)

119. Newman to Bellasis, 7 Mar 1858, *L&D* XVIII, pp.284-7

any age was tightened up: the earlier a boy came the better, "as less guarantee would be required as to his morality or antecedents". The only guarantee for morality Hope-Scott suggested was that of "vigilant caution".¹²⁰

The promoters agreed that Newman's view matched their own.¹²¹ They merely asked for clarification on two points: whether the Oratorians were secular priests; and why Newman continually spoke of the connection of the school with the Oratory as temporary. The promoters were now all agreed that matters would be simplified if the school began "as an Oratorian school, leaving the future to take of itself". If it proved burdensome the Oratory could sever its links, but there seemed no need to refer to this possibility at the outset. They intended to inform Wiseman that, though Newman had spoken of a "mere temporary supervision", it was "not *now* necessary to provide for its continuance by means of masters or otherwise" as, in the event of a separation, the necessary arrangements could be made when the time came.¹²² Newman explained that the Oratorians were "secular Priests living in Community". One reason for not pledging themselves to the school for good was "that it might be hard on our successors". The most Newman had ever spoken of was 20 years, and this was longer than he preferred to say. However, he saw no objection to calling it "our school absolutely", although "properly speaking, the school would be mine and Darnell's, not the Oratory's".¹²³

Commenting on this episode, McClelland describes Wiseman as suspicious of the "new aristocratic school" and concerned about the number of Etonians advising Newman.¹²⁴ McClelland also claims that Wiseman was worried the school would not be

120. Memorandum in Bellasis's hand, 'Hope-Scott Q.C. Proposed answers to the Interrogatories of his Eminence Card. Wiseman', Mar 1858, BOA. There are one or two jottings in the margin, again in Bellasis's hand, querying the replies, perhaps arising from the promoters' suggestions at their meeting. It was customary for the colleges to request references from parish priests about the moral standing of boys applying to them. (Upton, *op. cit.*, p.80)

121. The meeting on 8 March was attended by Allies, Bellasis, Dodsworth, Rock and F.R. Ward.

122. Bellasis to Newman, 8 Mar 1858, BOA

123. Newman to Bellasis, 12 Mar 1858, *L&D* XVIII, p.292-3

124. According to McClelland, the old Etonians were Allies, Hope-Scott, Pollen, Simeon and Thynne. In fact, Feilding, Scott-Murray and Wegg-Prosser were also old Etonians. Wiseman had previously criticised the religious education at Eton, yet, as McClelland acknowledges, he was later accused of trying to establish a Catholic Eton at Oscott during his presidency, and criticised for allowing a worldly atmosphere to prevail at the expense of religion. McClelland says he pursued his goal "by the gradual elimination of the poor

under direct episcopal influence (though this was already the case with the religious colleges). McClelland's interpretation of Bellasis's first, short answer to Wiseman as "a very cold reply and one little calculated to assuage his anxieties" is harsh.¹²⁵ Bellasis intended his brief reply to suffice until the fuller one could be agreed upon: Hope-Scott's draft reply was warm and detailed.¹²⁶ This explanation makes sense as Bellasis remained on very friendly terms with Wiseman.¹²⁷

Wiseman explained that, after reading through the papers he had been sent, he felt he had no right to put the questions as the "whole plan is essentially to have a lay school under not only Oratorian management, but under the same roof as the Oratory".¹²⁸ It is no surprise that Wiseman should have had second thoughts, since the plan represented a departure from the collegiate system. He recognised the complexity of the issue and took his chance to distance himself from it by arguing that it was not a matter necessarily under

boys" and by encouraging students to have extravagant tastes. (McClelland, *A Catholic Eton*, pp. 5 & 10) The number of old Etonians among the promoters reflected their preponderance among the converts: of the 425 public-school converts Gorman identified, 93 were from Eton, 39 from Harrow and 33 from Winchester. (Gorman, *op. cit.*, p.xiv)

125. McClelland, *A Catholic Eton*, p.10

126. It ran as follows: "Those who have occupied themselves in considering the mode in which a new Catholic lay school might be best established have been far from losing sight of the necessity not only of providing proper religious instruction but of insuring such a Catholic training throughout as should at the same time lead the students to habitual piety, and produce a deep love and veneration for old Catholic usages and practices. It will be seen that many of the promoters of the scheme are converts, which has tended to make the above consideration a prominent one from the first, as being (if that is possible) more essential to them than to those who have been all their lives subject to Catholic influences. [The list of 32 names followed.] The desire, on the part of all, to provide security for the Catholic element in the school, led to the wish to connect it, if possible, with some religious body, and, as it was understood that Dr Newman was not unwilling to undertake the task of forming the school, his connection with the Birmingham Oratory seemed to provide all that was desired. The present situation therefore is to commence a school at Edgbaston under the direction of Dr Newman and under the religious care of the Fathers of the Birmingham Oratory. Neither the present accommodation nor the space for additional accommodation at Edgbaston would allow of a school beyond 40 or 50 boys. Some of the Interrogatories remained unanswered; this is caused in part by the explanation given above, that it was intended that the school should be under the management of the Birmingham Oratory and in part by the desire and indeed the necessity for more mature deliberation." (Draft letter to Wiseman — part of memorandum in Bellasis's hand, 'Hope-Scott Q.C. Proposed answers to the Interrogatories of his Eminence Card. Wiseman', Mar 1858, BOA)

127. Wiseman occasionally dined with Bellasis at home; he officiated at the marriage of his daughter in 1864; his children were invited to the cardinal's Christmas party for children. (Bellasis, *Memorials of Mr Serjeant Bellasis*, p.186)

128. Wiseman said he only wished to point out that an application to Rome might be required for the plan for the dame to share a roof with the Oratory. (Wiseman to Bellasis, 8 Mar 1858, BOA) Jackson's interpretation of the affair is that Wiseman withheld his consent because of the inconsistency of having a lay school under an Oratorian roof. (J. Jackson, *op. cit.*, p.137)

his jurisdiction. Ever sensitive to ecclesiastical authority, Acton thought Wiseman had over-stepped the mark by sending the questionnaire.¹²⁹ With hindsight it is fair to say that Wiseman was justified in asking, among other things, what the power of the bishop would be "as to visitation, correction, removal of chaplain and spiritual supervision".¹³⁰

Further progress despite opposition

On Newman's advice Acton and Bellasis saw Ullathorne about the movement for the new school.¹³¹ Newman prepared him for their visit by describing the Oratory's position: that it was not yet committed to the plan; that they had been asked "to '*nurse*' the School, while it is in its infancy"; that only Darnell had "the qualifications or taste necessary for the work".¹³² At the meeting Ullathorne approved the principle of a lay school but expressed misgivings over the means to match the discipline and general management in the colleges.¹³³ His attitude reflected two concerns about the school staff: the anticipated absence of cradle Catholics and the predominance of laymen.¹³⁴ Acton interpreted Ullathorne's remarks as "a declaration of war", reflecting the hostility to the plan of Ullathorne's household and his fellow bishops.¹³⁵ Nevertheless, Ullathorne convinced them to postpone the building plans at the Oratory and to rent a house nearby instead.¹³⁶ It seems that Ullathorne had been frightened by Wiseman, who had told him that he would have entire responsibility for the scheme; in turn, Wiseman had been influenced against

129. Acton thought that the cardinal's *animus* was more evident in the questions than the accompanying letter, and that their "minuteness" was a mistake: they would commit a similar mistake by answering them in detail. "The details I take to be entirely Newman's affair". (Acton to Bellasis, 7 Mar 1858, BOA)

130. 'Questions on the subject of the proposed lay-school at or near Birmingham', *L&D XVIII*, p.287

131. Acton to Bellasis, [12, 19 or 26] Mar 1858, BOA

132. Newman to Ullathorne, 30 Mar 1858, *L&D XVIII*, p.309

133. Bellasis to Newman, 3 Apr 1858, BOA

134. Adams has gathered evidence to claim that lay teachers were looked upon as a necessary evil, even for teaching the laity: there was strong opposition to W.G. Ward's appointment at St Edmund's (though it was, admittedly, for a post in theology); Clifton Catholic Grammar School was established in 1855 by the bishop and predominantly staffed by convert clergy, despite the abundance of local married graduate converts, such as Thompson, who were able and willing to teach; in old Catholic circles, even private tuition was almost exclusively the preserve of the clergy. (P.A. Adams, 'Converts to the Roman Catholic Church in England, circa 1830-1870', B.Litt., Oxford, 1977, pp.116-19)

135. Acton to Bellasis, 6 Apr 1858, BOA

136. Bellasis to Ullathorne, 2 Apr 1858, BOA

it by Faber.¹³⁷ The promoters were already aware that, to protect the collegiate system, and Oscott in particular, various bishops intended to oppose the plan.¹³⁸

For his next move Bellasis took Newman's advice.¹³⁹ Bellasis explained to Ullathorne that he and Acton, "the spokesmen for others", had "no notion of committing your Lordship to an approval of it or of putting you in the position of being in any way responsible for it". They had merely considered it a duty to inform him of the plan as it was in his diocese. Bellasis asked for confirmation that he did not intend to veto the scheme. Ullathorne obliged.¹⁴⁰ McClelland puts a different gloss on Ullathorne's hesitancy to approve the scheme: it signalled his fear that a dangerous alliance between old Catholics and converts might develop.¹⁴¹ A simpler explanation is that it owed more to the issue being a hot potato and one situated in his diocese. This interpretation is supported by Newman's opinion that Ullathorne was the only bishop who was not against the plan, and "if left to himself would be for us".¹⁴² At the bishops' annual meeting in early April there was further opposition to the plan.¹⁴³

Newman was ruffled by Ullathorne's remark that he, the Oratorians and other converts considered the discipline in the colleges to be too strict.¹⁴⁴ It reflected talk about Newman's discipline at the University.¹⁴⁵ Regarding school discipline, Newman

137. Newman to Bellasis, 1 Apr 1858, *L&D* XVIII, p.310

138. Bellasis to Newman, 10 Mar 1858, BOA

139. Newman said "it will never do to have it said (*which will otherwise be said*) that we, you and ourselves, began against the expressed wish of the Bishop of the diocese". (Bellasis to Newman, 1 Apr 1858, *L&D* XVIII, p.310)

140. Ullathorne put in writing that he was "in no wise disposed to offer any opposition or discouragement to the contemplated experiment at Edgbaston". Bellasis also asked Ullathorne to verify his summary of their meeting so that he could reliably inform the promoters. Ullathorne did so. (Bellasis to Ullathorne, 2 Apr 1858 & Ullathorne to Bellasis, 4 Apr 1858, BOA)

141. McClelland, *A Catholic Eton*, p.12

142. Newman to Hope-Scott, 18 Oct 1858, *L&D* XVIII, p.490

143. Later that month Bellasis was in Wales where he met Bishop Brown of Newport. Brown had understood from Wiseman that the proposal was to have married men and their families living in the school house. After Bellasis had clarified the matter, the bishop authorised him to say he approved of the experiment being tried. (Bellasis to Newman, 12 Apr 1858, BOA)

144. Bellasis to Newman, 5 Apr 1858, BOA

145. Cullen contributed to the reputation Newman acquired for lax discipline by complaining about the liberal attitudes in Newman's hall of residence, where the young men were allowed to go to dances and keep

emphasised to Bellasis: "The only point of *principle* on which we should differ from the Colleges, is that we should aim at doing every thing above board", forbidding spying, listening at doors, and the like. He was uncertain whether or not they ought to open the boys' letters, as was customary at the colleges. Either way he desired "such honesty and openness in our conduct to the boys, that they would have no temptation to *distrust* us". Only "time and experience" would remove doubts about his ability to keep order and the other reasons for lack of trust in "our school plan".¹⁴⁶

On 11th April the Oratory began a novena for the school.¹⁴⁷ A rare lapse occurred in Newman's abiding preoccupation that the parents be involved, as he did not inform them of it. When Bellasis found out, he asked what prayers were being said so that he could participate and make others do likewise: Newman apologised. Only at this stage did Bellasis show Newman the list of 32 prominent Catholics supporting the plan, all but one of whom were "decidedly friendly". Bellasis estimated that only a few would be willing to help financially. Unfortunately, those "most anxious" about the plan were the least able to aid it.¹⁴⁸ On 21st April the Oratory decided unanimously to allow Newman and Darnell to proceed with the school plan.¹⁴⁹

Newman informed the heads of the colleges, just as he had in 1850 about the St

hunting horses. (Cullen to Barnabò, 31 Aug 1858, *L&D* XVIII, p.451n)

146. He explained to Bellasis that, while "I have it as little in me to be a good schoolmaster [...] as to be a good rider [...], this does not hinder my feeling the *need* of strict discipline for boys — for many a man approves what he cannot practise". (Newman to Bellasis, 6 Apr 1858, *L&D* XVIII, pp.314–15)

147. Before further committing himself and, as a consequence, the Oratory, Newman wanted to ensure that he was following the will of God and to ask for guidance.

148. Bellasis reported that Allies, Badeley, Hope-Scott and F.R. Ward were the most interested. (Bellasis to Newman, 12 Apr 1858, BOA)

149. The Decree of the General Congregation of the Birmingham Oratory ran as follows: "Decreed unanimously that the Congregation gives its sanction to Fr Nicholas Darnell's being Fr Superior's representative in undertaking, at the instance of friends in London, the establishment and formation of a school for lay boys of the upper classes, of the nature of such public schools as Winchester and Eton, his relation to it being not materially different from that which a Father of the Oratory would bear towards a Ragged School, a Reformatory or Workhouse, and the Fathers of the Congregation being in no way connected with the boys except as having their direction in spiritual matters and in ecclesiastical functions and devotions." (BOA) The Decree is transcribed in Newman to Bittleston, 22 Apr 1858, *L&D* XVIII, p.328. See also Murray, *op. cit.*, p.463.

Wilfrid's scheme.¹⁵⁰ He explained that the promoters wished lay boys to be educated separately from church boys, and that Ullathorne was "as strong for ecclesiastical [boys] being kept apart from lay". It was anticipated that the new school would not interfere with the colleges, partly because the fees would be much higher. He admitted some anxiety as to "whether a lay portion can be kept religious without the element of ecclesiastical", but explained that the beginning would be small enough to result in little harm if the experiment proved to be a failure.¹⁵¹ While Weedall assured Newman there was no fear of collision, he only agreed in theory to the separation of lay and ecclesiastical elements. He argued that the colleges were far from being able to survive on their own resources and maintain expensive buildings without "large subsidiary aid".¹⁵² Sweeney replied that "the great and important work of Catholic Education must be promoted by such a step".¹⁵³

Second crisis and stagnation (May – October 1858)

Informing Bellasis of the Oratory's commitment to the undertaking, Newman waxed strong on the reciprocal responsibility of the parents. They needed to secure 30 boys as well as promises, both for the sake of financial backing and appearances, thus building up a number of backers and patrons who would speak on behalf of the school among Catholics, in order to counter "much prejudice, opposition, criticism, adverse whispering, and ready belief of tales told to our disadvantage". The problem of securing initial help,

150. After Oscott had been allowed to dictate the terms on which the Oratorians could begin a college at St Wilfrid's, Newman contacted Prior Park, Stonyhurst and Ushaw. The replies from Prior Park and Ushaw in 1850 were cordial but discouraging. There was no response from Stonyhurst. (*L&D* XIII, pp.392-4)

151. Newman to Newsham, 13 Apr 1858 & Newman to Weedall, 29 Apr 1858, *L&D* XVIII, pp.320-1 & 339-40

Charles Newsham (1792-1863) became President of Ushaw in 1837 and virtually refounded it on account of the material, intellectual and spiritual changes he oversaw.

Henry Weedall (1788-1859) was President of Oscott for the periods 1826-40 and 1853-59.

152. Weedall thought they would be like different trees growing together in the same soil, "each searching out and drawing up its own peculiar juices" without interfering with the other. (Weedall to Newman, 3 May 1858, BOA)

153. He wrote regretting they would not be receiving Ward's sons. (Sweeney to F.R. Ward, 5 Apr 1859, BOA)

James Patrick Norbert Sweeney (1821-83) was educated at Downside and took a BA at London University. He became a Benedictine and was ordained in 1848. He was Prior of Downside for the period 1854-59.

and "the *continuance* of such interest and support" during the difficult early years, would be solved along with the pressing financial problem "by making them [the promoters] responsible for the first expenditure and risk of expenditure which will be incurred". He analysed the finances and translated this parental commitment into figures: an initial down-payment of £600 for fittings and alterations; a loan of £1000 for works on the church; a guarantee of the deficit if numbers fell short. This proposal was a "first sketch" — not a "final proposal" — until Newman had heard the promoters' views.¹⁵⁴ In the interests of working in tandem with them, he had suggested liaising with Bellasis, Hope-Scott and possibly one other, "whom we might privately and confidentially consult on the details of our plan of proceeding".¹⁵⁵ Bellasis could only acknowledge the news of the Oratory's decision and the accompanying proposals. He was extremely busy with the Shrewsbury Peerage case,¹⁵⁶ as was Hope-Scott. Acton and others were abroad.¹⁵⁷ After a hectic three-month period, all communication ceased until Newman took the initiative at the end of November, seven months later.

The change in tempo was dramatic. The promoters' commitment to the enterprise had induced Newman and the Oratory to combine with them. Having deliberately kept a low profile beforehand, Newman now intended to throw himself wholeheartedly into the scheme. No sooner had he done so, than he seemed to be left in the lurch. During these months of waiting he had to resist the temptation to step in and engage in the 'temporalities' that he had so forcefully declared to be the promoters' responsibility; no easy course for one who had recently masterminded the establishment of a university. His unwillingness to force the issue by softening his demands for parental backing makes it

154. Newman to Bellasis, 23 Apr 1858, *L&D* XVIII, pp.330–2. (This letter was later withdrawn.) The income of 30 boys at £70, totalling £2100, would be split; half for school expenses, half for the 'pension'. He anticipated school expenses would be: "House rent, rates, taxes, etc £200 / Head Master £100 / Latin Master £300 / Prefect of playground and bedrooms £200 / Servants £100 / [total] £900". Surplus income would be used to pay the interest at 4 per cent on the £1000 for the church works. The other half of the income would be used to meet the cost of board.

155. Newman to Bellasis, 6 Apr 1858, *L&D* XVIII, p.315

156. From 1853 Bellasis and Hope-Scott were the advisers of the Earl of Shrewsbury. They managed his landed estates with an annual income of £50,000 until his death in 1856. The Shrewsbury Peerage case began in 1857 and dragged on for a decade. The contention for the title and possession of the property lay between the heir, Earl Talbot, and the Duke of Norfolk to whose son it had been devised by the recently deceased Earl of Shrewsbury. During these ten years Bellasis and Hope-Scott had the entire control of the estate.

157. Bellasis to Newman, 28 Apr 1858, BOA

abundantly clear that Newman considered such involvement a *sine qua non* for the plan.

There was one practical matter Newman felt he could involve himself in; finding a school agent.¹⁵⁸ It was impossible to proceed "unless the Gentlemen who are interested in it appoint some one to act for them in gaining promises of support, in raising funds, in securing pupils, etc and in transacting business with the Oratory Fathers". This was the promoters' business, not his or the Oratory's. The purpose of these "stipulations" was "not only to set us free from the chance of loss, but also in order to interest the Gentlemen [...] in the project in some special way, by making its success an object of personal concern to them".¹⁵⁹ Ward declined the invitation to act as school agent as he was too busy.¹⁶⁰ On asking Pollen, Newman gave another indication of his sensitivity to the joint nature of the enterprise. Fearful lest he trespass on the domain of the promoters, he included the caveat: this "depends on yourself on the one hand, on Bellasis & Co on the other — not on me".¹⁶¹

Newman dreaded "beginning and creeping on with a few". Besides incurring debt, low numbers also meant falling short of "the idea of a school".¹⁶² In May, Darnell went to London "to see why the school matters flagged". The problem was money. Newman's friends were unable to raise funds for what was an uncertain venture. The news drew Newman to the bleak conclusion that "the whole plan is at an end".¹⁶³ St John's remarks provide a more realistic picture: Newman was overworked and Bellasis was "full of the Shrewsbury job"; "They [the promoters] will never let the school drop".¹⁶⁴

158. Newman had insisted that a paid agent in London was essential for the success of the college at St Wilfrid's. (Newman to Coffin, 15 Feb 1850 & Newman to Faber, 18 Feb 1850, *L&D* XIII, pp.423–5)

159. Newman's memorandum, 19 May 1858, *L&D* XVIII, p.332. See also Newman to Bittleston & Newman to Flanagan, both 30 Apr 1858, *ibid.*, p.341. Newman spoke from his experience in Dublin where he had learned that "*you cannot have a University till the gentlemen take it up*". (Newman to Capes, 1 Feb 1857, *L&D* XVII, p.514)

160. Bellasis and Monsell, as well as Newman, thought that F.R. Ward would be suitable. (Newman to Scott-Murray, 7 Jul 1858, *L&D* XVIII, p.402) The agent was to be paid £100 p.a. out of school funds.

161. Newman to Pollen, 20 Aug 1858, *L&D* XVIII, p.444

162. Newman to Scott-Murray, 7 Jul 1858, *L&D* XVIII, p.402

163. In reconciling himself to the outcome, he reflected that there was no use in bemoaning the lost opportunity: "We have many ways of serving God and St Philip". He told Pollen: "*I give up* the expectation of a school". (Newman to Bittleston & Newman to Pollen, both 21 May 1858, *L&D* XVIII, pp.352–3)

164. Comments of St John on Newman's letter to Bittleston, 21 May 1858, *L&D* XVIII, p.353

With no-one willing to undertake the role of school agent, Bellasis somehow managed to keep the momentum going.¹⁶⁵ He continued writing begging letters and arranging meetings. A letter to Monteith illustrates his approach. After describing the undertaking, Bellasis emphasised that it met a pressing need. Here was a window of opportunity. Newman was ready to begin but needed backing before he could announce his intention. He was not expecting any profit from it. He needed £2000 to cover the cost of outlay and to provide a guarantee. Only three contributions of £100 had been received. "As having an equal interest with ourselves", could Bellasis count on his help?¹⁶⁶ Monteith's reply is noteworthy in revealing that the attraction of the plan was not only Newman's involvement: "the working interest which you and H[ope-]S[cott] take in it is no small guarantee that it will be thoroughly made".¹⁶⁷ The winning of Gaisford¹⁶⁸ to the school cause in 1859 owed a good deal to Bellasis's persuasive powers. Gaisford had already spoken of the plan with Simeon and Gerard¹⁶⁹ but still favoured Downside. A week later, after meeting Bellasis, he had undergone a profound change: he decided to contribute £50, to guarantee the scheme with a further £50, and had volunteered to write to three others about it.¹⁷⁰

A major impediment to the plan was that many of the influential Catholics contacted were already committed to other undertakings.¹⁷¹ By late June, Bellasis had exhausted all avenues, and matters had almost come to a standstill. He realised the predicament in which the plan found itself. If Newman were to announce his intention to

165. Writing to encourage Ward to undertake the task, Bellasis explained he was "wholly unable to dedicate any time to our educational scheme". (Draft letter from Bellasis to F.R. Ward, n.d. [1858], BOA)

166. Bellasis to Monteith, 27 Jun 1858, BOA

167. Monteith to Bellasis, 30 Jun 1858, BOA

168. Thomas Gaisford (1816–98) was the eldest son of Dean Gaisford. He was educated at Rugby School and Christ Church, Oxford. He lived in Sussex where he was a JP and Deputy Lieutenant of the county. He became a Catholic in 1857. He married three times: a daughter of Rear Admiral C. Feilding in 1850; a daughter of the third Earl of Howth in 1859; and the youngest daughter of the seventh Marquis of Lothian in 1870.

169. Sir R.T. Gerard, the 13th baronet, was an old Catholic who lived at Newton-le-Willows.

170. Gaisford to Bellasis, 6 & 14 Jun 1859, BOA

171. Several had anticipated the financial demands. Biddulph Phillips was candid about his situation. He said he would be truly grieved if the plan collapsed for lack of support, but that he was unable to promote it with boys or money, "for the calls on one's surplus funds are more and more numerous and seem to increase every year, whilst one's income cannot be accused of any such tendency". He offered to help on a lower level; by mentioning the plan to others. (Biddulph Phillips to Bellasis, 6 May 1858, BOA)

begin he was sure to have enough pupils offered, but he would not do this without backing. However, parents were holding back because there was no full commitment to the plan. The argument went full circle and explained the stalemate reached.¹⁷² Bellasis suspected that even a large benefaction would be insufficient to attract many boys and break the deadlock, as several, like Monteith and Gerard, were willing to provide financial support but intended to hold back from sending their sons until it had started and showed signs of success.

The plan's dilemma was neatly conveyed by an old Catholic. Gerard thought the scheme was "extremely good — but not perfect". It would answer a need in providing "more pastoral care" for small boys than was currently available, but "what guarantees does a school not yet formed offer for this desirable end?" Having a few subscribers and Newman as "nominal Head — and living anywhere" guaranteed nothing. The real head might be another Oratorian and less suitable. Until the real headmaster and regulations had been announced, he thought that few would be willing to subscribe. So far none of the old Catholics had "joined the movement".¹⁷³ In fact only a handful of converts were willing to risk all and give their full backing: money and sons. The suspense and uncertainty for Newman were punctuated by occasional indications of progress.¹⁷⁴ One promising new recruit was Mrs Charlton,¹⁷⁵ an old Catholic and a friend of Mrs Bellasis. She requested books so that she could prepare her sons for the planned school. Since the colleges and convents were "so undeniably behind the times, in all things relating to education", she declared it would distress her to entrust her sons to "well meaning, but, untutored 'ecclesiastical' ploughboys"! It was "to the aid of Converts" that they, the old Catholics, looked "for the prosperity of the old Faith".¹⁷⁶ She reacted with disbelief to a rumour

172. Bellasis to Acton, 25 Jun 1858, BOA

173. Gerard to Bellasis, 27 Jul 1858, BOA

174. Monsell relayed the news that he was "charged by Bellasis to look out for pupils". (Monsell to Newman, 8 May 1858, *L&D* XVIII, p.344n) Later Scott-Murray promised £100 for the school, as well as his sons. (Scott-Murray to Newman, 5 Jul 1858, BOA) Newman told Pollen that he was the only one sending news "about the continued agitation about the school". (Newman to Pollen, 20 Aug 1858, *L&D* XVIII, p.444)

175. Barbara Tasburgh Charlton (1815–98) was descended from two ancient Yorkshire Catholic families. In 1839 she married W.H. Charlton of Hesleyside, from another old Catholic family. She was educated at a Sacred Heart convent in Paris.

176. Mrs Charlton to Mrs Bellasis, 13 Aug 1858, BOA. The letter was passed to Darnell, via Pollen and Newman, for answering.

that the plan had collapsed. How could the bishops be "so insane as to break down an undertaking which could not fail eventually to be of the greatest advantage to the Catholic gentry — the eyes of the most bigoted, must be open to the cruelty and disadvantage of sending sons to our underbred Colleges". It was sad for parents like herself to feel their "everlasting dragchain '*bigotry*' ever is keeping us, from all social improvement".¹⁷⁷

Despite her wholehearted support, she was, like Gerard, not intending to send her son until he was ten. Ward's predicament highlighted a similar difficulty — his two sons appeared to be too old.¹⁷⁸ Like Gerard, Mrs Charlton asked what was to become of the boys once they were twelve. Surely Newman intended to "superadd and carry out his plans more extensively — otherwise, it will be mere cruelty, placing boys in a 'gentlemanly school' with the certainty, they must undergo afterwards the painful feeling of receding in civilisation, as, no old Catholic establishment can come under the denomination of a '*gentlemanly College*'".¹⁷⁹

In October Newman put his gloomy case to Hope-Scott and requested advice. He explained he would not have attempted the school but for the need itself and Darnell's "wish and capacity to undertake it". The idea had been for a small, discreet beginning, letting "the fact of its existence grow on people's minds". It had been altered, due to his friends' interest, "to a formal intention, and a sort of recognised, public undertaking". Of late it had "subsided again into something like its original state". However, because of the public airing it had earlier received, it would now "be measured, not by what it is, but by those greater ideas which were to come after, and which have been divulged". Furthermore, he was now alone, a priest in a diocese, challenging Oscott, Ushaw and Stonyhurst with a great plan, whereas before he was "answering a call" from "a number of respectable names" and "personally protected". He was also feeling the inquisitory gaze of church dignitaries: "It might be represented at Rome, that I am setting up a convert school and perpetuating a convert spirit and party", a claim he dreaded having to refute.

177. Mrs Charlton to Mrs Bellasis, 8 Nov 1858, BOA

178. He had two sons aged 10 and 12, but the plan was to start with small boys and to accept older ones three years later. Early hopes of some solution seem to have receded by the end of 1858, as Downside became the likely destination of the boys. Nevertheless Ward contributed the £50 he had promised. (Bellasis to Newman, 12 Apr 1858, BOA & Newman to Bellasis, 13 Apr 1858, *L&D* XVIII, p.320)

179. Mrs Charlton to Bellasis, 11 Feb 1859, BOA

"Now, as my friend, what would you advise me to do?"¹⁸⁰

The distinguished parliamentary lawyer set his mind to work on Newman's doubts. The difficulties, Hope-Scott explained, were of two kinds; those arising whatever the plan, and those arising on account of the delay. The latter presented no problem because of the "crying necessity" for the school "among a definite number of people who know and trust you". They would send their sons to it, knowing they would get what "they *know* they cannot find elsewhere". The discussion had in fact diminished the first set of difficulties, as it had "exhausted the feelings of hostility", and because so much had been said "of the *want*" that "attempt at supply [...] will now appear the smallest part of the mischief". His advice was: "go on by all means".¹⁸¹

The way forward: commitments made (November 1858 – May 1859)

On 25th November, after his last visit to Dublin and resignation of the rectorship, Newman broke the deadlock. He sent Bellasis a draft manifesto, requested his opinion "on the *whole* — and again in *detail*", and suggested a number be printed and sent to friends.¹⁸² Bellasis and Hope-Scott were delighted. Taken at face value, it had all the appearances of a *volte-face*, a capitulation in the face of insurmountable difficulties. It appeared that Newman had decided to abandon his demand for full backing and, instead, to strike on without it. Had he reneged on his original conception of the partnership after striving so long to preserve it?

All doubts are removed in a diary entry which reveals Newman's analysis of the situation and explains his apparent change of mind. The Oratory had indeed taken the initiative with the establishment of a school for the Catholic upper classes, Newman observed, but "it must never be forgotten that, as that very object implies, the duty and the interest rest with that upper class, and not with the Oratory". It had been stated earlier with the request for an advance of £2000. It had not been forthcoming as parents were not

180. Newman to Hope-Scott, 18 Oct 1858, *L&D* XVIII, pp.489–90

181. Hope-Scott to Newman, 21 Oct 1858, BOA

182. Newman to Bellasis, 25 Nov 1858, *L&D* XVIII, p.518

convinced "we were the men to do the work. The project in consequence was in a lock: the Oratory waiting for the money, and the parents for a trial of the Oratory." Newman resolved that the Oratory should begin using its own resources in order to "furnish [...] trial of our capacity, which it was natural for parents to demand".¹⁸³

The two lawyers excised the greater part of the manifesto, reducing it to the bare minimum:¹⁸⁴ the originator — Newman, "at the urgent instance of friends"; the name — Edgbaston Catholic School; the starting date — 1st May 1859; the pupils — boys under twelve "not destined for the ecclesiastical state"; the bishop's "approbation"; its location — by the Birmingham Oratory; feminine care for the boys; and the headmaster — Darnell.¹⁸⁵ To avoid provoking arguments, Hope-Scott considered it enough that people should know, "1. That it is a lay school. 2. That parents want it. 3. That the Bishop approves."¹⁸⁶ Three sections were excised: the first,¹⁸⁷ about the need for the foundation, because it "affords a point of attack"; the second,¹⁸⁸ about Newman's hope

183. The point was that, at the time of writing, he judged that they had undergone two years of trial and proved themselves, and that it was time for the demands to be reciprocated. (Newman's memorandum, 5 Feb 1861, *L&D* XIX, p.463)

184. Jackson claims the shortened manifesto was Newman's draft prospectus and that it was rejected by the promoters, who replaced it with one of their own which emphasised the public-school dimension. He uses this to prove that Newman wanted a private school whereas the promoters wanted a public school. (J. Jackson, *op. cit.*, pp.143–6) The correspondence between Bellasis, Hope-Scott and Newman disproves this. Besides, the prospectus Jackson claims to be the promoters' is actually from the summer of 1862.

185. Newman's draft manifesto (BOA) after the excisions and alterations of Bellasis and Hope-Scott ran: "Father Newman, of the Birmingham Oratory, intends with the blessing of God, to commence on May 1 next, a School for the education of boys, not destined for the ecclesiastical state, and not above 12 years of age on their admission. He takes this step at the urgent instance of friends, and with the concurrence and countenance of a number of Catholic gentlemen whose names have been transmitted to him. The undertaking is commenced with the approbation and good will of the Right Revd the Bishop of the Diocese. A house has already been taken within five minutes walk of the Oratory, with acres of garden and land, capable of accommodating as many boys as are likely to be intrusted to his care. The boys will be under the care of an experienced matron and female assistants who will have the management of the house; and the School-room and its masters will be under the rule and superintendence of Father Darnell." A separate incomplete section read: "[centred] Edgbaston Catholic School / Head Master — The Rev Fr Darnell of the Oratory, late Fellow of New College / Assistant Masters — / Prefects of the Playground — / Prefects of the Dormitories — / Confessors — the Fathers of the Oratory / Terms — £100 including all extras / There are two vacations, one of seven weeks in the summer, and the other of three weeks at Christmas."

186. Hope-Scott to Newman, n.d. [Nov 1858], BOA

187. "Their object in this application is, as he conceives, that of the establishment of a School, which, while securing the high religious benefits of Catholic training, is founded under a sensitive apprehension, and conducted with a direct contemplation, of the needs and circumstances of the day." (Newman's draft manifesto with Hope-Scott's alterations, BOA)

188. "For himself, his own recent engagements in the new University, which has excited so much interest in Great Britain as well as in Ireland, have naturally suggested to him the expediency of some system of

that it would support the Catholic University, because it "will allow people to say that the school is a mere feeder to the Dublin University"; the last,¹⁸⁹ claiming that the colleges would not be damaged, on the grounds that *qui s'excuse, s'accuse*.¹⁹⁰

The heavy editing of Newman's draft shows how sensitive Bellasis and Hope-Scott were to the prospect of opposition. While amused at their "lawyer-like caution, in cutting off every unnecessary word", Newman told them of his growing awareness of the "hard and wrong things" said of him, the cause of their tact. He warned that the criticism levelled at him might "tend seriously to involve the prospects of the school", but that he intended to ignore it, even if his friends urged him to answer the accusations "for the sake of a school". He would refrain from speaking even when the school had grown from a personal project into an established public one. "Therefore, I think all those who are earnest in the plan of a school, should carefully think over these contingencies first, and see their way clearly as regards them."¹⁹¹

Newman's decision to proceed marked a new stage in the foundational process. While a change of emphasis was implied, there was no suggestion that the promoters were to be absolved from securing funds and pupils. Suggestions concerning masters, fees and other matters continued to pour in via Bellasis, as the promoters sought to secure the best possible arrangements.¹⁹² While it was the wish of all that Newman should be

education for boys, which might be in harmony with the University course, and might look towards that course as the complement of the teaching carried out in its own classes." (*Ibid.*)

189. "He feels confident, that the firm and recognised position, the *status*, the high repute, and the overflowing numbers of the existing Colleges, will of themselves be sufficient to protect him, without any explanation of his own, from any appearance of disrespect towards those time-honoured establishments, or interference with their object, in the prosecution of his own design, which does not but contemplate a scheme of education suitable to youths whose duties are to lie in the world." (*Ibid.*)

190. Bellasis to Newman, 29 Nov 1858, BOA. Newman's original phrasing, that the house was to be "managed by ladies residing in it", was altered, as the term 'ladies' could be taken to mean 'religious'. There were close similarities between this manifesto and that of St Wilfrid's as a college: its emphasis on supplying a Catholic desideratum; that it catered for Catholic laymen; that it was to begin "after consultation, and with the sanction of ecclesiastical superiors". (Buscot, *op. cit.*, p.239–40. As has been stated already, the authorship of these comments was attributed by Buscot to Faber, though it should have been to Newman.)

191. Newman to Bellasis, 4 Dec 1858, L&D XVIII, pp.527–8

192. Another promoters' meeting led to several more minor changes to the manifesto. They considered "rule" should be omitted from "under the rule and superintendence of Father Darnell", if there was to be a distinguished Classics master such as Arnold — Newman agreed. For the same reason, they recommended an alternative title be found to "assistant master" — Newman replaced it with "master". Besides the

unhampered in his work of setting up the school, Newman used his freedom of movement precisely to work with them through Bellasis. Newman's efforts to engage an assistant master were hindered by unease over the plan's financial viability, and a leaner budget, based on lower numbers, was put forward. The danger of incurring a deficit was considerable as contributions only amounted to £500. Newman asked Bellasis: "can we move without a guarantee, in some shape or other, against losses, or without a larger sum to begin with?"¹⁹³

Another element of risk stemmed from "active opposition" from Faber "in the form of a rival school near London, or of private discouragement".¹⁹⁴ Newman wondered whether this "opposition against us reduces our probability of success so low that it is unwise in you to risk any sum". He thought Bellasis and Hope-Scott ought to consider whether the £500 fund was not "a middle measure, too little to succeed with, and too much to throw away". Newman surmised that some of the promoters backing their scheme might, quite understandably, be wishing to cover themselves with a backup scheme near London that involved Faber and a wealthy individual.¹⁹⁵ Hope-Scott and Bellasis dismissed all such thoughts.¹⁹⁶ Acton managed to ascertain that the London Oratory objected to the school plan because it was judged to be "inconsistent with the [Oratory] rule" and doomed to failure on account of Newman's "general incompetency". Faber had previously mentioned to Acton that he would not only tolerate but assist the school, and Acton was prepared to make this statement public if the need arose.¹⁹⁷

inducement of a salary, it was suggested that a Classics master could be offered extra payment for each boy over a certain number. Failing Arnold, they wondered if someone else could be found at the Catholic University. Newman heeded this advice. (Bellasis to Newman, 14 Dec 1858, BOA)

193. Costs were reduced by taking "a young general grinder" at £100 instead of an experienced teacher, forgoing the headmaster's £100 and engaging one Prefect instead of two. The expenditure for house and staff now totalled £500 and, along with matching costs for board, was to be met by having at least 13 boys paying £80 each. (Newman to Bellasis, 21 Dec 1858 (first letter), *L&D* XVIII, pp.552-3)

194. Bellasis to Newman, 18 Dec 1858, BOA

195. Newman to Bellasis (second letter), 21 Dec 1858, *L&D* XVIII, pp.552-4. For further details see Newman's memorandum: defamatory talk in London, 20 Dec 1858, *ibid.*, pp.549-50.

196. Hope-Scott considered London unsuitable for a school. Bellasis thought a location in the south of England more attractive in itself, but that "the attraction to me of the proposed Birmingham school consists in the founders". (Bellasis to Newman, 18 Dec 1858, BOA & Hope-Scott to Bellasis, 20 Dec 1858, *L&D* XVIII, p.553n) It was in keeping with his self-effacing nature that Bellasis should not have entertained the idea that he was himself a co-founder.

197. Acton to Newman, 9 Jan 1859 & Acton to Darnell, 3 Feb 1859, BOA

In view of the threat of a rival school, opposition from Faber, and "a certain amount of hostility from the convert side", Bellasis and Hope-Scott agreed to Newman's suggestion to lower the fees from £100 to £80, and offered to guarantee the school a further £500.¹⁹⁸ On this "most satisfactory" news Newman considered it decided that they should begin.¹⁹⁹ The debate about fees was linked to the idea of a first-class school. Scott-Murray had argued that the fees should not be lower than £70, which he considered with his "protestant idea *very low indeed*".²⁰⁰ Gaisford voiced a similar sentiment.²⁰¹ After the school opened, Bellasis took up the matter with Newman, as Monsell²⁰² and Gaisford were concerned that the school would not be sufficiently select, though neither had boys ready for it. Bellasis confessed to having no "strong opinion" on the matter.²⁰³

The school is scarcely mentioned in Newman's *Letters and diaries* during the four months preceding its opening, reflecting the extent to which Darnell was masterminding preparations, as well as Newman's involvement with other business. During this time Newman kept Bellasis abreast of developments, such as his efforts to secure a second master and Darnell's visits to London. Meanwhile there were indications that opposition

198. Newman to Bellasis (first letter), 21 Dec 1858, *L&D* XVIII, p.552 & Bellasis to Newman, 25 Dec 1858, BOA

199. There was one day remaining of the second novena for the school which Newman again failed to tell Bellasis about in time. (Newman to Bellasis, 28 Dec 1858, *L&D* XVIII, p.555) Newman had asked the Fathers to meditate on the intention: "O, St Philip, give us no new mortification — but either prevent the school, or prosper it." He told them that their "great difficulty lies in a quarter where we might have expected neutrality, if not sympathy". (Chapter address, 20 Dec 1858, Murray, *op. cit.*, pp.380 & 383)

200. Scott-Murray to Newman, 5 Jul 1858, BOA. After visiting Newman to discuss the school, the Scott-Murrays were convinced that, after all, £80 was the most suitable level for fees. (Bellasis to Newman, 7 Feb 1859, BOA)

201. He doubted whether a really good education, with the best masters, was possible for less than £100. (Gaisford to Bellasis, 14 Jun 1859, BOA)

202. William Monsell (1812–94) was educated at Winchester and Oriel College, Oxford. He was MP for Limerick 1847–74 and held various offices in the Liberal government: privy councillor, 1855; president of the Board of Health, 1857; under-secretary for colonies, 1868–70; postmaster-general, 1871–73. He became Baron Emly in 1874. He assisted Sewell in founding St Columba's, Ireland along with Lord Adare and Todd, all of whom were the first governors. Like Adare, whose sister he married, he became a Catholic. Together with Hope-Scott and Manning he advised Cullen in 1851 about the Catholic University. Newman dedicated to him his *Occasional lectures and essays* (the second part of the *Idea of a university*). A regular contributor to the *Rambler*, he was a close friend of the French liberal Catholic leader Montalembert. He became vice-Chancellor of the Royal University of Ireland in 1885.

203. Bellasis suggested inserting a clause in the school manifesto if there was doubt that £80 would be "adequate to meet the expenses, and also adequate to secure a certain degree of selectiveness in the boys". (Bellasis to Newman, 15 Jun 1859, BOA)

was widespread and on the increase.²⁰⁴ The months leading up to 1st May 1859 were anxious ones. In January three boys were enlisted, two Scott-Murrays and a Bellasis; in February the son of C. Stokes²⁰⁵ was added; in April the F.R. Wards changed their minds and added their two eldest boys; the son of F. Capes brought the total to seven.²⁰⁶ It is highly significant that all seven boys were sons of converts. Not one of the old Catholic families was willing to risk a son at the outset. Newman acknowledged the difficulty of parents in "our not yet having boys enough to make a real school or offer its advantages — it is the difficulty which comes first and is greatest in our attempt".²⁰⁷ Newman's diary entry for 1st May simply read: "New School began".²⁰⁸

Conclusion

What was founded? Comparisons with other foundations at the time are problematic as the school foundation bestrode two distinct systems, each with its own variety of types, each defying a systematic description. Besides, it was open-ended. It began as a preparatory school with the prospect that it might grow into a public school.²⁰⁹ As such it was an early example of that class of school which was to become fully developed in its characteristics by the end of the century. The new school could be said to satisfy three of the four criteria proposed by Donald Leinster-Mackay for designation as a preparatory school: separation, rustication and preparation. The fourth characteristic, the profit

204. Acton described how people were "most prepared to criticise" the plan and prejudice mothers with tales of Newman's lax discipline. (Acton to Darnell, 3 Feb 1859, BOA) Moody was the first assistant master appointed. Within a month he observed a Jesuit change his prognosis for the school from one of optimism to doubt, because it would have "Oscott and all the Catholics against us". (Moody's diary, 26 Feb & 23 Mar 1859, BOA)

205. Charles Samuel Stokes (1818–99) was educated at St Paul's School and Trinity College, Cambridge. He and his brother Scott Nasmyth became Catholics in 1845. Stokes was a private banker who had lost two fortunes, the second being a loan to Napoleon II. It was his brother who sent the boy to the school.

206. Many schools founded at the time began with few boys. Bloxham School started in 1860 with one boy and Beaumont Lodge in 1861 with four boys.

207. Newman to Mrs F.R. Ward, 30 Mar 1859, *L&D* XIX, p.95

208. *L&D* XIX, p.120

209. Some parents considered it a preparatory school for Oscott. (Newman to Bellasis, 16 Jan 1859, *L&D* XIX, p.18) A schoolmaster who offered his services for the planned "first-class school" suggested to Newman that "a preparatory school, such as exists in connection with the public schools, Eton, Harrow, etc., might be a very useful addition to the plan. All the plans and studies of this school would be formed on a model furnished by the Directors of the one to which it would be introductory." (J.H. Woodward to Newman, 4 Mar 1858, BOA)

motive, was absent.²¹⁰ In the light of its development into a public school on the same site and the intention to feed this one school, thereby forfeiting the characteristic of separation, it might be more appropriate to categorise it as a junior school or preparatory department. As such it could claim to be one of the first.²¹¹ Alternatively it could be viewed as a public school from the outset. This interpretation is eminently plausible as it sought to imitate Eton more than any other school, and Eton at the time had boys as young as eight.²¹²

Who founded the Oratory School? This research penetrates beyond the list of 32 names that McClelland uses as evidence to claim that it resulted from Catholic aristocrats enlisting Newman for their cause.²¹³ The list arose from the need to secure backing. It does not reveal the true identity of the founding group although it suggests the converts were heavily involved. (Acton argued against it becoming public knowledge as "the few native Catholics [on it] would be alarmed at the smallness of their numbers".²¹⁴) Indeed it disguises the fact that the real founders were almost entirely converts. Further confirmation of the dominance of the convert input comes from the list of subscriptions which reveals that £100 came from two old Catholics and £800 from nine converts.²¹⁵

210. The story of the emergence of these schools is authoritatively covered in D.P. Leinster-Mackay's *The rise of the English prep school* (London, 1984). Separation refers to both a physical and moral separation from a public school; rustication to its location away from a city or large town; preparation to its function as a feeder for the public schools or the Navy (but not the universities). (*Ibid.*, pp.12–18 & 59)

211. Leinster-Mackay argues that the Hertford Division of Christ's Hospital, founded around 1652, has a good claim to be the first junior school of a public school. The earliest junior school in his list of nineteenth-century foundations is that at Rossall in 1861. (*Ibid.*, pp.13–14 & 327) Hodder, the junior school for Stonyhurst, was begun in 1815. (Barnes, *op. cit.*, p.159) Of course, the usual order of adding on a junior school later was, in the case of the Oratory School, reversed.

212. The Clarendon Report II, pp.504–5, gives the average age of entry for Eton as 10 years and three months, significantly lower than the corresponding ages for Harrow and Winchester, which were 13.11 and 14.9 respectively. The lowest age of entry for Eton is given as eight years exactly. Leinster-Mackay's analysis of the Eton records reveals that 25 boys under twelve were admitted in 1861, including three aged eight and one a mere four years and one month. (Leinster-Mackay, *op. cit.*, p.109)

213. McClelland, *School or Cloister?* p.126. In an earlier article McClelland asserts that "Norfolk, Campden, Fielding, Thynne, Kerr, Throckmorton, Emly, de Vere, Jerningham were all among the original sponsors". ('The Kensington scheme: a reply', *Month XXXIII*, 1965, p.179)

214. Acton to Bellasis, [12,19 or 26] Mar 1858, BOA

215. There were seven subscriptions — £100 each from Bellasis, Gerard, Hope-Scott, Monteith and Scott-Murray; £50 each from Gaisford and Norfolk — and five guarantees — £100 from Simeon; £50 each from Acton, Gaisford (again), Monsell and F.R. Ward. (List of subscribers, n.d. [probably Jun 1859], BOA)

Apart from Scott-Murray, convert peers and gentry were not among the leading promoters. Campden gave the plan only his "simple approval"; Feilding was supportive but his money was "fully occupied [...] in founding the Capuchin noviciate"; Simeon was convinced of the need, but expressly wished not to be "one of the first promoters of the undertaking".²¹⁶ It was from the professional classes predominantly that the chief executors of the plan and its true supporters hailed.²¹⁷ They were the driving force. They were the ones quick to respond to Newman's idea. They made it their own and backed it with time and money. Above all they were willing to take the ultimate risk and entrust their sons to it. The foundational group can be narrowed down further still. It was comprised entirely of Newman's friends and admirers. They wished to begin a school under one who inspired immense confidence in them. Likewise, trust was a *sine qua non* for Newman to agree to undertake the task on their behalf.

Those who sent sons at the outset, or who planned the enterprise and gathered support for it, deserve to be called the school's founders. Newman later referred to the fund-raisers as "the real authors of the undertaking".²¹⁸ On account of their vital contributions, the chief founders can be identified as Bellasis, Newman and Hope-Scott: Bellasis as the chief promoter and man of action; Newman for his central role; and Hope-Scott as advisor to both.²¹⁹ Acton does not quite qualify, though he thought he had contributed more than anyone to the foundation.²²⁰ Despite the involvement of Acton and others, Altholz's claim that the foundation was an achievement of the liberal Catholic

216. Campden to Dodsworth, 17 Feb 1858, Feilding to Dodsworth, 18 Feb 1858, both BOA; Simeon to Newman, 4 Feb 1858, *L&D* XVIII, p.247

217. Bellasis and Hope-Scott were barristers; F. Capes and F.R. Ward were solicitors; S.N. Stokes and T.W. Allies worked in educational administration; C. Stokes was a banker; Gaisford served in the army; H. Wilberforce was a journalist; Pollen was an architect and private secretary to an aristocrat; Monsell was a politician. The only nobleman, Acton, was a dedicated historian.

218. Newman's memorandum: relation of the School to the Oratory, 19 Dec 1864, BOA

219. Hope-Scott gave advice in 1858 despite two family tragedies: his first wife took ill in the spring and died in October; and two of his three young children died in December. (Ornsby, *op. cit.* II, pp.152–3)

220. Acton to Döllinger, 28 Jan 1862, Döllinger, *op. cit.* II, p.247. This undoes D. Mathew's assertion that Acton only gave the conventional measure of support for a wealthy Catholic layman. (*Lord Acton and his times*, London, 1968, p.123) Before the school opened, Acton left his Aldenham estate for the continent in order to reduce his expenses. His financial difficulty was alleviated after his mother's death in 1860. (Altholz, *op. cit.*, p.87n)

movement is overstated.²²¹

Why was the Oratory School founded? The uppermost objective of the founders was the provision of an education for boys that would prepare them to compete on an equal footing with their Protestant counterparts. It was to be achieved by imitation of the English public school, whatever its shortcomings. This wider goal of furthering the cause of Catholic emancipation explains the involvement of so many who did not stand to gain directly, such as those without sons to educate.²²² The evidence of this chapter does not support McClelland's claim that the main purpose was to pursue a socially exclusive education and exclude episcopal oversight. To the extent that both goals were pursued, it was in consequence of the central idea: gaining full access to English life through a public-school education. Emphasis on "a more select class of boy"²²³ was intended to provide greater security for manners and habits. It arose naturally on account of the higher fees and the separation of ecclesiastical and lay boys. Besides, the fact that schools advertised themselves for gentlemen did not mean they only accepted gentlemen's sons.²²⁴ The setting up of a lay school entailed a diminution of ecclesiastical involvement. The evidence shows that deliberate evasion of due ecclesiastical jurisdiction was at no time contemplated.²²⁵ The exercise of legitimate rights by parents in securing a suitable education for their offspring was the point in question.

Reference to the sons of the gentry and professional classes acquiring "provincialisms" and "vulgaries"²²⁶ implied that, to achieve social equality in later life, the boys needed to acquire modes of behaviour that would not disqualify them from social

221. John Capes's father contributed to the *Rambler* as an art critic. When his uncle resigned as editor and proprietor in 1857 his father became a proprietor along with Acton and Simpson, though he kept this secret so as not to lose legal work from the bishops. When it became the *Home and Foreign Review* in 1862 only Acton and Simpson continued as proprietors. John Scott Stokes was sent to the School by his uncle S.N. Stokes whose article ('The Royal Commission on education', *Rambler*, Jan 1859, pp.17-30) questioning the bishops' handling of state support for Catholic schools provoked the threat of censure.

222. Other than Newman, the priests involved as promoters were Rock and Macmullen. At the time, Acton was unmarried and Hope-Scott had no sons.

223. Bellasis's memorandum, 12 Feb 1858, BOA

224. J. Gathorne-Hardy, *The public school phenomenon, 1597-1977*, London, 1977, p.125

225. McClelland asserts that the school was "devised to exclude episcopal oversight". (McClelland, 'School or Cloister?', p.116)

226. Bellasis, *Memorials of Mr Serjeant Bellasis*, p.193

and professional circles. The wish for "a certain degree of selectiveness"²²⁷ was in keeping with the times. It matches the conclusions of John Honey and John Roach who describe the second half of the nineteenth century as a period of growing stratification in the public-school system, when schools became increasingly aligned to social class.²²⁸ In chiding the school promoters for fostering class snobbery, McClelland and Upton overlook the social pressures of the times and the tensions this caused even within the Catholic colleges.²²⁹

Hope-Scott evidently regarded the mixture of classes at Rugby as satisfactory. He contended that there was a balance to be struck: between affording the salaries for good masters and making the school really public; and between catering for the upper classes and being able to hold safely a mixture of classes. It is telling that Newman and Bellasis decided not to capitulate to parents who pressed for higher fees to secure a more selective intake. Thus the three chief founders withstood the pressure for a narrower upper-class clientele. In McClelland's analysis, Newman and Bellasis appear under the suspicion of having collaborated in an aristocratic conspiracy — or at least at having played into their hands — to remove their sons from the major colleges to form a school of their own. This research finds no evidence for this interpretation. Instead of wholehearted support for the scheme, the promoters received clear signals to the contrary, such as Simeon's prediction that there would be no "general movement".²³⁰ Further evidence against the suggestion of a coordinated upper-class plot is the promoters' abiding preoccupation with the threat

227. Bellasis to Newman, 15 Jun 1859, BOA

228. The school foundations of Woodard and Brereton had been based on the perceived need to educate homogeneous social groups in their three-tiered middle-class schools. (Honey, *op. cit.*, pp.49–50) Roach refers to "a growing reluctance to tolerate the education of children of different social ranks within the same school". (J. Roach, *A history of secondary education in England 1800–1870*, London, 1986, p.160) One of the three principles used by Arnold at Rugby for fostering the school community had been consolidation — in ability, age and social class. (Honey, *op. cit.*, pp.14–15) Arnold discouraged sons of the aristocracy from going to Rugby as the mass of his boys were "sons of gentlemen of moderate fortune". (Mary Arnold to her sisters, 19 Nov 1839, *ibid.*, p.16)

229. McClelland, 'A Catholic Eton', pp.3–15 & Upton, *op. cit.*, pp.35, 47–50, 57–8 & 86–7. Upton admits that at Oscott there was antipathy to church students from humble origins, who were called 'bunkers'. A serious incident of discrimination occurred in 1853. The *Fitzgerald v. Northcote* trial in 1866 concerned the young Fitzgerald boy who was expelled for fostering anti-bunker prejudice. (Upton, *op. cit.*, p.46–8) Weedall, a former President of Oscott (1826–40 & 1853–59), had favoured the lay boys and "ever acted against the Church boys". (Newman's memorandum about a meeting with Ullathorne, 4 May 1865, BOA) At Stonyhurst there had been some ill-feeling on account of the mixture of classes, though, apart from church boys, the lowest class admitted were sons of large tradesmen. (Taunton Report V, p.330)

230. Simeon to Bellasis, 15 Feb 1858, BOA

of a rival school — which materialised in 1861, as Beaumont Lodge.

How was the Oratory School founded? The promoters sought to entrust the establishment and formation of their school to "the mature deliberation of some one mind" rather than to a committee. It is an over-simplification to say that the promoters devised an outline of the plan which they asked Newman to complete. The plan was negotiated. Moreover, a harmonious balance can be discerned between the roles of the two parties involved: the promoters and Newman. The intuition feeding the arrangement, as to duties and responsibilities, came mainly from Newman and reflected his understanding of the role of parents in the educational process. Acceptance by parents of the demands the arrangement implied — raising the funds and obtaining the pupils — suggests that it corresponded to their predicament as first educators, and attests to the validity of Newman's insight.

Bellasis and Hope-Scott were heavily involved in Newman's "mature deliberation". Bellasis's pivotal role meant acting as a channel of communication between Newman and the promoters. He kept Newman informed of parental hopes and demands; when asked, he sounded out others on Newman's behalf. Hope-Scott provided mature advice that was all the more objective for his being removed from the centre of activity. These three were chiefly responsible for determining the school's characteristics. The task of raising funds and finding pupils was carried out, not by means of public advertisements, but by a diffusion of ideas through personal contacts.²³¹ Undoubtedly this discreet approach was considered the most effective in the circumstances.

This research reveals a partnership at work. It was achieved through the efforts of Newman who laboured to encourage and avoid displacing the promoters' initiative. The contention is that this was a novel characteristic which informed the enterprise and made it a truly joint venture. That the details concerning the practical running of the school were left to Newman in no way contradicts this assertion. It simply marks out the limits to the range of competence for parental involvement. Newman's conception of this shared responsibility does not appear to be borrowed from other establishments.

231. The printed manifesto had not been released by February 1859. (Bellasis to Newman, 7 Feb 1859, BOA)

The proprietary principle was rejected by the promoters.²³² Ward considered it "of the utmost importance that the promoters should have absolutely nothing to do with any part of the management — in fact should simply raise the necessary funds, send their children, and rather take their chance for the rest"!²³³ Hope-Scott argued that the creation of a committee to control school admissions would result in it thinking it had more control than was safe or desirable. The committee would inevitably be comprised of subscribers and "the proprietary element would thus insensibly come in". It ought to be made clear at the outset that subscribers should have no extra rights over other parents. If a subscriber were to think himself hard done by when his son was refused admission or removed, then "the discipline of the school is at an end".²³⁴

The difficulty in assessing the observations about the strengths and weaknesses of the public schools and colleges is that most were based on an intimate knowledge of just one tradition. The dilemma over the wisdom of shared education is conveyed by the change of view of a convert priest, Morris,²³⁵ over a thirty-year period. After reading the documents sent him in 1858, Morris pronounced that the promoters would be making "a most excellent bargain" if they accepted Newman's offer. Just as "the Church never intended her future Priests to be at such schools as Eton and Harrow [...] it is equally clear that she never intended future lawyers, or diplomats, or Members of Parliament to be trained in her seminaries". Besides, it was clear "that your sons injure our seminaries, and that our seminaries do not suit your sons. [...] If the Oratory school promotes this entire and most necessary separation, it has my hearty prayers for its success." In 1887, as a Jesuit at Stonyhurst, Morris was taken aback by the dogmatic tone of his earlier

232. Proprietary schools were founded in the 1830s and 1840s on the joint-stock principle whereby funds were raised from shares. Each shareholder had a right to nominate a pupil. The directors, elected by the shareholders, often had a veto on the transfer of shares so as to maintain a level of social standing among the pupils. The schools chiefly served the sons of business and professional men. (Roach, *op. cit.*, pp.6, 104 & 184–8)

233. F.R. Ward to Newman, 9 May 1857, BOA

234. Hope-Scott to Bellasis, 7 Feb 1858, BOA. During the foundation of Glenalmond, Hope-Scott had declared "I somewhat dread committees and approval of rules by subscribers". (Hope to Gladstone, 18 Nov 1840, Ornsby, *op. cit.* I, p.242)

235. John Morris (1826–93) was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge. He became a Catholic in 1846 and was ordained three years later. After a spell as vice-Rector of the English College, Rome, he became secretary first of Wiseman, then of Manning. He joined the Jesuits in 1867 and was Rector at Roehampton for the period 1880–86.

comments. He acknowledged that everyone desired to see lay and church boys separated by the time of university studies, but reckoned all wished them to begin together, as it was difficult to tell them apart "before they know their minds". Whereas he used to consider that boys of the age of Eton best separated, he would now draw the line through "the middle of public school life".²³⁶

It is evident that, in the eyes of the converts, the colleges succumbed to the defect of being un-English, since they derived from a foreign tradition. An education that was perceived to be inferior merely because it was different was liable to prove a handicap to Catholics in later life. A Classical public-school education was considered to make the gentleman. Whether it did so or not, the bond of a shared culture united the upper classes into one caste. The promoters were all convinced, though to varying degrees, of the merits of a Classical education, including Bellasis with his scientific bent. The matter of discipline divided opinion sharply. Many converts disliked the system of surveillance used at the colleges. It bore similarities to private schools and was the antithesis of the public-school constitution which relied so heavily on a system of self-governance.²³⁷ On the other hand, old Catholics could not conceive how discipline could be enforced and morals safeguarded without proper oversight of pupils. The promoters were confident that Newman had the ability to solve the problem, but old Catholics were unconvinced and their wariness was reinforced by tales of Newman's reputation in Dublin. Another huge imponderable for old Catholics was the impact of removing church boys, for there was precious little evidence to go on. It was all very well to speak of "Eton, minus its wickedness", but what guarantees were there to be for ensuring high moral standards? The public schools only appeared to inculcate manly virtues and a "readiness to face the world".²³⁸ It is therefore no surprise that Wiseman regarded Acton's presence among the promoters as "his only security" in the foundation.²³⁹

236. Morris to Bellasis, 17 May 1858 (Bellasis, *A contribution towards Oratory School annals*, pp.10–11) & Morris to Bellasis, 5 Nov 1887, BOA

237. This had arisen from a delegation of power to boys which had become sanctified by tradition. (J. Chandos, *Boys together: English public schools, 1800–1864*, London, 1984, pp.30 & 54)

238. Simeon to Newman, 30 Apr 1857, BOA

239. Acton to Simpson, n.d. [Mar 1858], Acton, *The correspondence of Lord Acton and Richard Simpson I*, ed. J.L. Altholz & D. McElrath, Cambridge, 1971, p.17

Several characteristics of the converts emerge during the foundational period: the consciousness of their responsibility and role in their new credal body; their acute awareness of the great difficulties involved in challenging the collegiate system; and their resolve in the execution of the plan. The foundational story uncovers Newman's motives for involving himself and the Oratory: Darnell's enthusiasm and capacity; the great need of close friends; his desire to be of service; and the search for suitable Oratorian activities. Newman's prolonged reluctance to commit himself to the scheme provides further confirmation that he was not determined to see it through at all costs, as McClelland maintains.²⁴⁰ Analysis of the foundational period reveals the tactics Newman adopted: no more *Tracts*, as in his Oxford days; no more public lectures outlining theory before engaging in practice, as at Dublin. Instead he declined to work with those who did not share his vision. To those closest to him, he divulged his thinking, but only gradually. He waited for the agreement and commitment of others before advancing. If the response was less than satisfactory, he called a halt to proceedings. This was Newman at his most cautious.

What explains Newman's stance? Besides reasons of expediency — that he would be more effective acting with others, than alone — and the effect of recent experience at Dublin, another explanation suggests itself. Newman saw himself as helping his friends solve a problem — their problem: how to educate their children. Thus he held back from whatever displaced an involvement more proper to them. By design, his collaboration enabled them to put into effect their rights and duties as the first educators of their children. When he had preached on the purpose of education in 1826, he had urged that "parents should consider that from the earliest infancy of their children they are their natural guardians and instructors; that sending to school is merely an accidental circumstance, and but a part of education". On that occasion he had questioned the action of parents who think "they have done all that can be required of good and wise parents", when they have sent their children to school at the proper age.²⁴¹ This abiding conception of the educational task evidently guided Newman's involvement in the

240. Folk in London blamed Newman for not going ahead in January 1858 "when the iron was hot". (Newman to Bittleston, 21 May 1858, *L&D* XVIII, p.352)

241. 'On popular mistakes as to the object of education', unpublished sermon (no.128) given on two occasions in 1826, BOA

foundation of the Oratory School.

CHAPTER IV EARLY DAYS AND THE DARNELL AFFAIR

The nascent foundation quickly took root and grew. New pupils arrived at the start of every term, and after two years numbers had risen to 50. By the autumn of 1861 there were 57 boys. The "holding back"¹ among old Catholics melted away under the influence of its growing reputation. Seven boys joined from Downside;² several families in Ireland, no doubt owing to Newman's influence there, switched their allegiance from Stonyhurst;³ and there were some notable gains from Oscott.⁴ The most notable addition was the young Duke of Norfolk who arrived in the summer of 1861.⁵ Yet within two years serious problems had arisen. Newman had gradually become aware of them, but by the time they were serious he had lost control and all he could do was to wait helplessly while a crisis loomed. This occurred in December 1861 when it became clear that Darnell and Mrs Wootten could no longer work together. The dispute was eventually handled as an Oratorian problem, and to the assembled Fathers Newman offered his solution — the division of the school into two. At a subsequent meeting Darnell refused to accept any compromise and threatened to resign with all the other masters, who had written a letter linking their departure to his. Newman refused to yield to the pressure to dismiss Mrs Wootten. As a result, only she remained.

Several interconnected issues contributed to the crisis which were not evident at the time and only became clear afterwards. On the surface the dispute affected the extent

1. Newman to Flanagan, 25 Feb 1859, *L&D* XIX, p.50

2. These were Colyar, Hornyold, Jones (Herbert), Preston, Riddell, Waller and Wolseley who had entered Downside between 1857 and 1859, and transferred between 1859 and 1862. (*List of boys at St Gregory's: at Douay 1614–1793, Acton Burnell 1794–1814 and Downside 1814–1953*, Exeter, 1955 & T.M. Hinds, *Oratory School register, 1859–1919*, privately printed, 1966)

3. Boys from Ireland who entered the Oratory School in the period 1859–61 were two Fitzgeralds, Henchy, Moylan, Preston, Ram, Sheil and Waldron. The appearance of five of these surnames in the *Stonyhurst Lists, 1784–1886* (Stonyhurst, 1886) indicates the change in allegiance. At the start and finish of each term, Darnell accompanied the boys across the Irish Sea.

4. The Tichborne Hibberts entered in 1859, though an elder brother had been to Oscott. There were three transfers in 1860: the eldest son of Mostyn, the 8th baronet and an old Catholic; a Blount, from another prominent old Catholic family, a dozen of whom had previously been at Oscott; and the son of Lady Slade. Palmer entered in 1860 though an elder brother was at Oscott.

5. His arrival was undoubtedly due to Hope-Scott who had been appointed his trustee and guardian until the duke attained his majority in 1868.

of jurisdiction of Darnell and Mrs Wootten. However, it became evident that Newman's authority in the school was being challenged. In fact Newman and Darnell had been working to separate agendas and planning ahead in different ways. A split had emerged. One party — Darnell, some of the masters, and a few parents and other friends — was bent on the fast route to forming a public school, while the other — Newman, Mrs Wootten and the majority of parents and promoters — was content to see a more painstaking approach in which the Catholic dimension was not compromised.

Analysis of the school's development before the Darnell affair enables the tensions which inspired it to be identified. Broadly similar interpretations of events have been provided by all except McClelland. He claims that the "trinity of superiors" had not augured well, as Mrs Wootten was appointed for the wrong reason — her devotion to Newman. She acted as tale-bearer to Newman who encouraged her. Darnell refused to be ordered around by her and, given Newman's personal preferences, had little option but to resign. Effectively Newman betrayed a fellow Oratorian. Newman's hypersensitive personality and inability to work with Darnell were the cause of the crisis.⁶

The general aims for the school, agreed on by the promoters, were to be converted into reality by Newman. It is important to see how he went about the task: the arrangements he chose, the priorities he worked to, and the stamp he put on the establishment. However, Newman's paper plans need to be compared with practice under Darnell. Did school practice reflect the aims advertised in the prospectus? To what extent was it like those other Victorian foundations which suffered an identity crisis by attempting to cater for disparate needs? How did the school evolve and grow? Did the result win the approval of parents? The school began with a promising team — Newman, Darnell and Mrs Wootten — and initial success — rapid growth and the winning over of old Catholics. Why did it suffer a major crisis? Were its structures faulty? Can the crisis be explained by differences of personality? Answers to these questions emerge from the contents of this and the following chapters.

Appropriate primary sources are available for tackling both sets of questions: about

6. McClelland, 'A Catholic Eton', pp.12-14

the school's early life, and the crisis. School arrangements were outlined in a manifesto and prospectus, and developed into a 'constitution', recorded in the Congregation minute book. In the course of this chapter several interesting matters emerge: Newman's handling of early vocations; the tensions arising from substantial parental involvement; the feminine contribution to the education of young boys; and 'consumer' pressures, such as the demand for milder discipline. Thematic sections on the school's early years cover its structure, minor difficulties and their resolution, the continuing partnership with parents, the attitude of the public-school lobby, and parental worries and expectations.

Over 330 letters and other documents relating to the Darnell affair will be used in this chapter and the next. The analysis based on this data amounts to a case study of the crisis that nearly crippled an important foundation. The correspondence of the principal parties supplies the detail for making sense of it, while papers from the Congregation meetings help to reveal the deeper issues at play. The diary of the senior Classical master gives an 'inside story' of developments.⁷ A chronological build-up to the crisis provides the perspective from which Newman made his momentous decision: it allows that decision to be assessed. As a whole, this chapter examines Newman's role and the extent to which he was responsible for the crisis, whether in management or ill-conceived schemes.

The structure of the school and the role of the dame

The arrangement Newman devised relied on three key roles. The headmaster was to be Newman's "representative in undertaking [...] the establishment and formation" of the school.⁸ The boys were to live a short walk from the Oratory in a house "committed to the management of an experienced lady, as Matron". Newman, as President, was to preside.⁹ The foundation was blessed with three very gifted individuals for the key roles. Darnell, the headmaster, was the son of a scholarly clergyman. He had been a scholar at Winchester, prefect of Hall (head boy) and captain of Lords (cricket). A year after

7. The diary is detailed but hard to read. The main references to the school in 1859 and 1860 have been extracted by Canon Tomkins. (R.S. Moody's diary, 1859-60 & 1862-66, BOA)

8. Decree of the Congregation of the Birmingham Oratory, 21 Apr 1858, BOA

9. School manifesto, 21 Feb 1859, BOA. It gave a minimum of detail, sufficient to inform, but without restricting Newman's freedom.

entering Exeter College, Oxford he became a Fellow of New College. He resigned in 1847, on becoming a Catholic, and a year later joined the Oratorians. In 1859 he was an active, capable and self-confident man, in the prime of his life and with a taste for schoolmastering.¹⁰ Mrs Wootten was the wife of the doctor popular among the Tractarians. She became a Catholic after her husband's death in 1850 and was one of Newman's most loyal friends.¹¹ Newman described her as *mulier fortis et sapiens*.¹² That she was a lady of independent means reinforced the notion of her dedication above and beyond the mere call of duty.¹³

Newman called Mrs Wootten and Darnell "the two pillars of my undertaking".¹⁴ He condensed Bellasis's five reasons for the parents wanting a new school into two desiderata:

1. that boys should have their private needs, as boys, attended to [...] the care of their persons, their cleanliness, health, and the superintendence of their childish weaknesses and troubles, and
2. secondly that they should be well grounded in their books and have a really liberal education.

Mrs Wootten was to supply one, and Darnell the other: "their intimate friendship was an additional reason for their undertaking those offices".¹⁵

Newman's conception of the role of the dame requires explanation. Initially the

10. Tristram, 'The Oratory School', Jul 1932, pp.108–10

11. Newman numbered her, along with St John and two other Oratorians, as one of the four who had "generously thrown themselves and all they had into my hands". (Newman to Miss Poole, 29 Dec 1876, *L&D* XXVIII, p.154) She had established herself in Birmingham to be able to help Newman.

12. The epitaph in the Birmingham Oratory Church (and reproduced in the Oratory School chapel) reads:

*Orate pro anima mulieris fortis et sapientis Francescae Wootten
Quae scholam hanc ab incunabilis fovebat
Et in assidua alumnorum cura vitam agebat
Pie obiit die Januarii 9, 1876*

13. Answering an enquiry about the school, Newman boasted: "If we have one point, which we lay stress on, more than other schools, it is in the quality of our matrons. They are ladies, who do not make a livelihood by their places, but have means of their own — and they take peculiar care of the boys." (Newman to Miss Holmes, 22 Nov 1861, *L&D* XX, p.68) Newman had a purpose in emphasising financial independence: a principal reason the dames' houses were abandoned in the first half of the nineteenth century was the abuse of the system by exploitative dames. (Bamford, *The rise of the public schools*, pp.194–5)

14. Newman's 'Paper proposing a compromise', 24 Dec 1861, *L&D* XX, p.86

15. Newman's 'Second paper with proposals for a compromise', 28 Dec 1861, *L&D* XX, p.90

seven boys lived under her charge at 96 Hagley Road. There was a chapel in the house where daily Mass was said by one of the Oratorians. After breakfast the boys left for lessons at the Oratory and only returned in the evening. As numbers grew, other houses were acquired¹⁶ but only one other dame was engaged — Miss French¹⁷ — who cared for the older boys. Although Newman borrowed the title dame and part of the concept from Eton, he envisaged a fuller role as guardian or housemother.¹⁸ The dame was entrusted with the pastoral care of the boys in her house or houses and was to correspond directly with the parents — usually the mothers — about the general welfare and health of their sons.¹⁹

Mrs Wootten regarded herself as having pledged to "look to the personal health and comfort of the boys committed to my care". If she noticed anything "faulty in their intercourse with their comrades, or in any little matter, [...] I would naturally try to help them out of it". She was able to send for a boy without "fuss or difficulty". On doctor's orders she might have to administer to a boy a glass of wine and biscuit at bedtime, which would be best taken in her room, as it would appear like a special favour in the dormitory. Equally, boys were to have easy access to her for their various needs:

an extra pocket handkerchief, a collar, *a dry pair* of stockings and so forth [...] Also *boys may* want to give me messages from their Parents about their health, or clothing, or shoes, or about an advance of money, or to exchange stamps for money, or to have letters read or written for them, or corrected for them without publicity. Or they may want their sore feet, hands and so forth attended to without a doctor or any special notice.

She had "the discretionary power of putting boys into such dormitories and beds" as she thought best for them, taking into account the masters' suggestions. Naturally, she had "the entire care and management" of the sick, and communicated directly with doctors and

16. 6 Vicarage Road, 22 Plough and Harrow Lane, and finally 67 & 68 Hagley Road (adjacent to the Oratory)

17. Elinor French was one of the "nunnish ladies" who helped at the Oratory and whom Newman once hoped would run a girls' boarding school. (Newman to Miss Giberne, 23 Jul & 30 Oct 1849, *L&D* XIII, pp.239 & 278) Previously Miss French had been a governess. The activities of these ladies is documented in J. Sugg, *Ever yours affly: John Henry Newman and his female circle*, Leominster, 1996.

18. Nash, *op. cit.*, p.3

19. This conformed to the Victorian pattern whereby mothers of the middle and upper classes regarded early schooling as their responsibility, while their husbands had more to say about public-school arrangements. (Leinster-Mackay, *op. cit.*, p.21, n.37)

parents in these matters.²⁰ She kept accounts of each boy's personal expenses and sent them regularly to parents.²¹ In fact her duties were similar to those of the modern Eton dame.²²

Newman thought the dames had a huge contribution to make: "By throwing the boys into houses, we shall secure, as far as that is possible, superintendence and care both of their souls and of their bodies."²³ Far from merely tending to the boys' material needs, the dames had a role that, in some respects, put them on a par with the Oratorians, for Newman considered that the school would slip into "subordinating religion to secular interests and principles [...] but for the presence of Matrons of a high class, and of spiritual directors".²⁴ One incident highlights the dame's elevated role: it also provides a crucial insight into Newman's view of early vocations which helps explain his attraction to the idea of a lay school, even for those called to the priesthood or religious life. Bellasis informed Newman that he thought his eight-year-old boy showed signs of a vocation to the priesthood. He wondered whether the school was appropriate, given that it was for those "not intended for the Ecclesiastical State".²⁵ Newman delayed his answer, partly "from wishing to talk to Mrs Wootten on the subject".²⁶ (No reference was made to consulting Darnell or one of the other Oratorians.)

In his reply Newman set out his thinking — untypical for the time — on early vocations. True vocations were not destroyed by contact with the world. Many boys

20. Mrs Wootten to Newman, 7 Dec 1861, BOA

21. The accounts, sent three times a year, were to include "Medical attendance, Wine if ordered regularly, Books, Pocket Money, Clothes". (School prospectus, n.d. [1861], BOA) Those of the Duke of Norfolk survive: an itemised, chronological account for his first part-term (Easter Term, 1861); the account for Michaelmas Term, 1861, in categories; the sums for Michaelmas Term, 1863 entered on a pro-forma. (Arundel Castle archives, C.581)

22. In *Eton: a dame's chronicle* (London, 1965, pp.19–31) N. Byron describes her duties during the period 1928–63. Her tasks included responsibility for the health and general welfare of the boys, medical supervision, keeping their accounts, handling pocket money, giving permission for purchases, communicating messages, attending to visitors, and responsibility for the domestic and kitchen staff.

23. Newman to Lewis, 26 Aug 1860, *L&D* XIX, p.398

24. Newman's 'Second paper with proposals for a compromise', 28 Dec 1861, *L&D* XX, p.91

25. Bellasis to Newman, 28 June 1861, BOA. Bishop Grant had encouraged Bellasis to send him to one of the colleges. (Bellasis, *Memorials of Mr Serjeant Bellasis*, p.190)

26. Newman to Bellasis, 5 August 1861, *L&D* XX, pp.21–2

showed signs of a vocation early on, which all too often faded away, not because it was lost, but because it had only been present in appearance. Avoiding such deception could only be a positive good. The more likely danger for the Church was not "losing priests whom she ought to have had, but gaining priests she should never have been burdened with". It was an awful thought that boys could have "no trial of their hearts" when, at 14 years of age, "they go out into the world with the most solemn vows upon them, and then perhaps for the first time learn that the world is not a seminary". Early separation from the world tended to foster a "spirit of formalism, affectation, and preciseness". By contrast, many Saints had received a vocation when young and "cherished it and matured it in the course of a secular training". In his opinion it was "*more* common in this age for false vocations to be made by an early dedication to the religious or ecclesiastical state, than for true vocations to be lost by early secular education".²⁷

Newman's response contained a surprising suggestion: "I found Mrs Wootten take the same view, as far as she spoke upon it. She spoke from such experience as she had — I wish you would write to her." Evidently she so identified with the spiritual dimension of the school that Newman could rely on her in this way.²⁸ The school must have appeared as a partnership between her and Darnell, under Newman's presidency. When Darnell was away during the vacations, she conducted school business with Newman: she even received applications from parents.²⁹ A measure of the confidence Newman had in her was the way he could depend on her to take charge of the young Duke of Norfolk. The Duchess exchanged letters with Mrs Wootten in much the same way as other mothers.³⁰

27. *Ibid.* As it happened, before receiving Newman's reply Bellasis had decided that the boy should join his elder brother at the school. (Bellasis to Newman, 31 Aug 1861, BOA) The boy went on to become a lawyer while the elder one, who had shown no such signs, became an Oratorian!

28. Newman to Bellasis, 5 August 1861, *L&D* XX, p.22. On another occasion Newman expressed his gratitude to her for using "her influence among the boys to excite devotion to St Philip and an affectionate loyalty towards his Birmingham House". (Newman to Mrs Wootten, 5 Dec 1861, *L&D* XX, p.77) Mrs Wootten was "more like a Saint than most people", Newman once commented. (Newman to Mrs Ward, 8 Aug 1859, *L&D* XIX, p.188)

29. Lewis wrote to Darnell via Mrs Wootten. (*L&D* XIX, p.398n)

30. Letters from Mrs Wootten to the dowager Duchess survive; nine about the young Duke and eleven about his younger brother, Lord Edmund Howard. Their absence of formality is striking. The matter-of-fact content ranges over standard boarding-school matters: moods — especially homesickness —, foibles and developing good habits; patterns of sleep, matters of diet and dressing regime; blisters, sores, bruises and other minor ailments arising from schoolboys knocks and falls; toothache, colds and sicknesses requiring medical attention; the acquisition of social virtues, friendships and choice of dormitory comrades; pleasures — cricket, outings, gardening and pets — and dislikes — usually school-work! It is evident that some

The Darnell affair was triggered by confusion over the role of the dame. Although Newman had envisaged a role for Mrs Wootten at the outset, added impetus had come from the promoters who wanted Newman to imitate the Eton dame arrangement.³¹ More by accident than design, the dual system of houses under masters and dames had developed at Eton in course of its history, as it had at other schools.³² The Clarendon Report reveals that, due to the pressure of masters wanting boarding houses, the number of dames' houses had dwindled to nine, four kept by ladies and five by men. Although the Commissioners favoured the house-master system, dames' houses were allowed to die out naturally.³³ All dames' houses were nominally under the control of a Classical tutor, but the dame was the ruling power.³⁴ Newman had experienced a similar system at Ealing School where each boarding house was under the jurisdiction of a dame.³⁵ Furthermore,

correspondence arose from the content of the boys' letters home. The earliest letter mentioned that Darnell would report separately "about school". (17 Apr 1861) Mrs Wootten told the Duchess she wished anxious mothers would communicate more readily, though she found it difficult both "to write enough and avoid giving an undue importance to trifles". (Mrs Wootten to the Duchess of Norfolk, n.d. [Apr or May 1861], Arundel Castle archives, C.581)

31. Besides the old Etonians advising him, Newman must have been acquainted with old Etonians at Oxford. The father of the hero in his novel *Loss and gain: the story of a convert* (London, 1848; 1876, pp.2-3) sent his son to Eton. "There", Newman wrote, "he will get discipline, he will gain habits of self-command, manliness and circumspection. He will learn to use his eyes, he will gradually be trained for the liberty which he must have when he goes to college."

32. In the 1760s Eton had 13 houses; 3 under dominies (masters) and ten under dames. By 1851 only about 130 out of about 600 boys were in dames' houses. (C. Hollis, *Eton: a history*, London, 1960, p.157; Tristram, 'The Oratory School', Aug 1932, p.133) By 1838 Arnold had effectively raised the entry age to Rugby to 12 by abolishing the dames' houses and promoting the house-master system. (D. Newsome, *Godliness and good learning: four studies on a Victorian ideal*, London, 1961, p.41)

33. The Eton authorities wished to retain some dames' houses, not for educational reasons, but because of their cheapness. The last dame left in 1905, though most of the dame's role remained intact, but under the jurisdiction of the house-master. (Reference has already been made to this using Byron, *Eton: a dame's chronicle*, pp.19-31.) The commissioners virtually suggested the creation of a prep school within Eton because of the large numbers of younger boys. In 1869 J.W. Hawtrey left Eton taking with him all the younger boys to form Aldin House (or Hawtrey's) at Slough: it became *the* prep school for Eton. (Clarendon Report I, pp.98-100 & 119; III, pp.83 & 262-3; Leinster-Mackay, *op. cit.*, pp.3 & 109-10)

34. The most detailed account in the Report concerns Mr Evans who had no teaching duties but, as a dame, had the "social charge" of 46 boys. The small boys were given motherly affection by the ladies in his family. There was "entire confidence" between dames and parents, and good relationships between dames and tutors. Discipline, identical to that at tutors' houses, relied on him supporting the authority of the older boys. Evans claimed that the arrangement gave him time to devote to the formation of character of the individual boys. (Clarendon Report III, pp.260-1; C.K. Paul, *Memories*, London, 1899, pp.108-10)

35. The Ealing dames ensured that the boys were properly dressed, and cared for them when sick. They also ran the tuck shops. (J. Jackson, *op. cit.*, p.49) Jackson does not identify the source of his information. He uses E. Jackson's *Annals of Ealing: from the twelfth century to the present day* (London, 1898) for most of his information about Ealing School, but it appears to contain no reference to dames.

a letter written in 1846 indicates the value Newman placed on a dame arrangement.³⁶

Darnell's knowledge of the Eton dame system was secondhand because at Winchester there were no dames in the Eton sense.³⁷ His idea of a dame was that of the Winchester matron, a subordinate to the headmaster. It was the normal use of the term. Newman's plan incorporated a system of dual control, with the headmaster supreme in the school and the dame supreme in her house. It seems that Darnell submitted to this arrangement, but may not have appreciated the implications or how different it was to be from the system at Winchester. Alternatively, it is possible that he did appreciate the difference but dismissed it on the presumption it would prove unworkable, chimerical or merely temporary.

A distinct practical advantage of the system of dames' houses was that it facilitated expansion. As the school grew, more houses were acquired. Newman's policy was made transparent in the first of two major memoranda before the crisis, and which he read to the Congregation. He suggested they should take advantage of their good fortune and lack of troubles, "and place ourselves boldly before the world", putting the school "on a more formal and firmer basis, and in a more visible position". This would also give it "consequence in the eyes of the boys themselves [...] if it is to flourish at all, they must have visible objects, to make them venerate it, to engage their affections, to make them proud of [it], to lead them in after life to look back with pleasure on their school days".³⁸ His policy is encapsulated in one crucial sentence: "What the school needs absolutely, and also to give it character and make it imposing, is School-rooms — and the

36. Mrs Bowden asked Newman to advise her on a suitable school for her son, aged 17. After her conversion she wished to move him from Eton to a Catholic establishment. Newman recommended Prior Park for three reasons: it was the college most "like a gentleman's home"; it had the greatest proportion of Oxford men among its staff; and it had a dame, "a superior person", who took her duties seriously. (Newman to Mrs Bowden, 30 Aug 1846, *L&D* XI, p.237)

37. Darnell had been a Scholar and had lived in College. His last year at Winchester coincided with the first year of Moberly's long headmastership. Before his reforms, the commoners lived in one single large establishment, not in houses, and mixed little with the collegers. During Darnell's time at Oxford there were only Wykehamists at New College. (Barnes, *op. cit.*, p.241)

38. Sewell and Woodard stressed the importance of fine surroundings, but for reasons that differed from Newman's. Woodard emphasised the need to provide "for the cultivation of the taste of the pupils through the agency of the highest example of architecture". (L. & E. Cowie, *That one idea: Nathaniel Woodard and his schools*, Ellesmere, 1991, p.10; L. James, *A forgotten genius: Sewell, of St Columba's and Radley*, London, 1945, p.142)

only thing which it will ever want, if the plan of Dames Houses is continued".³⁹ Besides the dames' houses for younger boys, dormitories for older boys were to be added above the new school buildings.⁴⁰

In December 1860 Newman put to the Congregation a "scheme for the administration of the School" which was provisionally adopted, on a majority vote, for a year. It was the nearest he came to drafting a school constitution.⁴¹ It defined the school's personnel as the Father Prefect (headmaster), the assistant masters, the secretary, the confessors, the dames and the servants. The establishment was to consist of dames' houses for boarding and lodging the boys, and a central building.⁴² The appointment of all masters, dames and servants was to lie with the headmaster but required confirmation from Newman. The confessors were to be appointed by Newman.⁴³ The latter arrangement was similar to that which operated in the Woodard schools where the chaplains were appointed by the Provost and Fellows, not the headmaster.⁴⁴ The headmaster was to deal with the routine finances. Newman, as the representative of, and with the knowledge of the Congregation, was to deal with all financial arrangements concerning school properties, including alterations and furnishing, and he was to fix the salaries of the masters and the pensions (boarding fees). Each house was to have its own dame, though the same dame could, with Newman's permission, have more than one

39. Newman's memorandum: the Oratory School, 30 May 1860, *L&D XIX*, pp.348–50

40. *Ibid.* His plan was to build these central school buildings between the Oratory and the newly acquired adjacent houses. Some of the dames' houses were five minutes' walk from the Oratory, and Newman intended to cease using these and "gradually to close round the Oratory". (Newman to Lewis, 26 Aug 1860, *L&D XIX*, p.399) This change reflected a feature of the Victorian era, the slow but progressive divorce of the public school from its surroundings. Instead of boys eating and sleeping in town, in boarding or dames' houses, they came to be lodged in central buildings or boarding houses contiguous to them. (Bamford, *The rise of the public schools*, pp.194–5 & Gathorne-Hardy, *op. cit.*, p.105)

41. At the meetings with Cullen in 1851, it was agreed that "the University should be started with[out] statutes, or any formal constitution, and that the Rector and his assistants should govern according to their discretion, until experience had given the data for establishing it in a regular manner." (Hope-Scott to Newman, 24 Jul 1851, Newman, *Autobiographical writings*, p.281) The same strategy was adopted in setting up the school.

42. The central building was to contain a schoolroom, an exhibition room, the headmaster's room, his servant's room and the accountant's room. Exhibition rooms were in vogue at the time.

43. Minute book of the General and Deputy Congregations, 4 Dec 1860, BOA

44. This led to the headmaster resigning at Lancing in 1894 and roles being redefined. (Honey, *op. cit.*, p.56) Woodard wanted his chaplains to provide individual spiritual attention to boys and to have nothing to do with teaching or discipline. (Heeney, *Mission to the middle classes*, pp.62–3)

house. She was to receive from the headmaster, in advance and on a monthly basis, the pensions corresponding to her boys. The system of the Eton dames' houses was clearly central to Newman's plans.⁴⁵

Early days and initial difficulties

Newman's paper plans were one thing but working arrangements were another. The cause of the crisis can, in part, be traced back to Newman's lack of involvement in school affairs. Newman underestimated the extent to which he would have to be involved in forming a school along his own lines. He was scarcely to be seen and communicated little with Darnell and the masters.⁴⁶ Neither they nor the majority of parents were involved in discussions on the school's development; only Bellasis and Hope-Scott. The crisis revealed that a gap of understanding had opened up. It is illustrated by Thynne's⁴⁷ visit to the Oratory to talk over plans. Newman told him: "As to the ultimate destination of the School, in years to come, we must wait for the actual coming of those years, and the advice we get from friends like yourself, to determine us what is best."⁴⁸ Yet, a month later, the first outline of the school's development was composed — and with minimal consultation. It is easy, in retrospect, to pick up on these and other shortcomings, but an overemphasis on them would distort the picture of the first two-and-a-half years. For a balanced overview, a summary of developments before the crisis is needed.

The problems initially faced were mainly healthy ones, those associated with growth: enlarging facilities, engaging new staff and securing finance.⁴⁹ With the prospect

45. The secretary's task was to deal with all the other bills, and for his purposes the "Dames' charges for Pension and Extras" were to be treated like any other expense. He had to keep the accounts, prepare the cheques and present all the figures to the auditors on 1st August each year. Two of the Fathers would be appointed as auditors by the Congregation, to whom they would have to present a report within a week. (Minute book of the General and Deputy Congregations, 4 Dec 1860, BOA)

46. Acton told Simpson: "The boys see nothing of him, and the masters do not even know when he goes to London"; "He reduces himself to a nonentity in the school, by keeping aloof both from boys and masters". (1 & 5 Jan 1862, Acton, *Correspondence of Lord Acton and Richard Simpson II*, pp.248 & 250)

47. Charles Thynne (1813–94) was the seventh son of the second Marquis of Bath. He was educated at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford. He took orders and became a Canon of Canterbury. He and his wife became Catholics in 1852. After she died, he prepared for the priesthood and was ordained by Manning in 1886.

48. Newman to Thynne, 25 Apr 1860, *L&D XIX*, p.328

49. In April 1860 the Oratory acquired a lease for a nearby house with eight acres of meadowland to be

of increasing numbers and St John inheriting £4400, there was, in May 1860, an ideal opportunity to further "the material (and so moral) establishment of the school".⁵⁰ The theme of justice pervades Newman's memoranda about the school finances: the Oratory should not be unduly penalised for assisting the school and should receive interest on all unproductive investment in it — exception was made for improvements to properties which added proportionately to their market value. This attitude was all the more comprehensible in view of the Oratory's other involvements.⁵¹

Two houses adjacent to the Oratory (and belonging to St John) were acquired. Newman intended to convert them into dames' houses and to construct the school buildings along the road-front joining the two sites. In his second major memorandum about the school two schemes were outlined: a full-scale expansion costing £4000; and a less ambitious plan costing £900, based on adapting the houses. Hope-Scott was consulted. He persuaded the dowager Duchess of Norfolk to donate £500 for improvements in anticipation of the arrival of her son. In March 1861 the Congregation agreed to the more modest plan.⁵² Glimpses of Newman's longer term strategy indicate that a number of options were in his mind. Being tied to the Oratory meant that they were limited in the number of boys they could take. Thus they had "no wish to be a large school". If Oscott was reformed — if it were not partly a seminary and if the boys there were mainly "gentlemen's sons" — Newman envisaged the Oratory School becoming its feeder.⁵³

used mainly as a playground. On its first anniversary, the school took over the large room on the ground floor of the Oratory as the main schoolroom. By May 1860, £1500 had already been invested in adapting and improving the church.

50. Newman's memorandum: the Oratory School, 30 May 1860, *L&D* XIX, p.348. Moody and Darnell thought the current edifice made it look like a "small private school": imposing school buildings were required to convince parents about the imitation of the Eton system. (Moody's diary, 27 Mar 1859 & 13 Mar 1860, BOA)

51. In 1860 a Poor School was built in Smethwick which opened with 100 children the following January.

52. "Rooms about or in the Oratory would be our *chief dormitories*, together with those in Fr St John's houses; his houses would also furnish a *common dining room*". Study rooms and winter and wet-weather playrooms were to be sited in the new Oratory building. (Newman's memorandum about the school, 5 Feb 1861, sent with Newman to Hope-Scott, 19 Feb 1861, *L&D* XIX, pp.462–4) Planning delays held up the start of works until July 1861 and the young Duke had to make do with a room of his own in Mrs Wootten's house for his first term. In August Mrs Wootten was able to begin occupation of her house on the site. Fees were to be raised from £80 to 80 guineas to meet the anticipated shortfall between the £900 required and the £500 donation. The upper storey of the Oratory and the two houses were ready by September, but it was not until after the crisis that the schoolroom and playroom were.

53. He considered the main difficulty to be its "mixed character". While Newman thought that "things tend that way", it is unclear what indications there were that suggested such a radical change to Oscott. (Newman

Newman had to deal with two minor crises involving masters, the more serious of which involved Moody,⁵⁴ the second master. He was a "capital master", but evidently a grumbler.⁵⁵ Newman came to hear that rumours about being "in his dotage or just approaching to some such state of intellect" were being spread by Mr and Mrs Moody.⁵⁶ After consultation,⁵⁷ Newman drew up a list of charges, called the Moodys for an interview and confronted them with the main points. They denied them all and demanded to know who their accusers were.⁵⁸ Ward advised Newman to let the matter drop, given that a warning had been delivered, as they were likely to do more damage if dismissed.⁵⁹ Newman followed the advice⁶⁰ but on the next 14th February nearly all the Oratorians received unpleasant Valentine cards: there was strong evidence the Moodys were responsible.⁶¹

to Miss Holmes, 18 Aug 1861, *L&D* XX, p.31) During a conversation with Scott-Murray at the Oratory, Newman remarked that he would like to see Oscott "on such an improved footing" that it would be in a position to take the older boys. For clarification, he later emphasised that when he referred to Oscott, he meant to speak of "the site and the *material* establishment [...], not of the College, or Seminary" and "whether it could be *worked* (eg by Northcote) into a public school — the Seminary and the Bishop giving it up". (Scott-Murray to Bellasis, 22 Dec 1861 & Newman's memorandum, 16 Feb 1862, *L&D* XX, pp.97–8n)

54. Robert Sadleir Moody (1823–1907) was educated at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford. He took Anglican Orders but became a Catholic in 1854.

55. Newman to Pollen, 22 July 1860, *L&D* XIX, p.386

56. Mrs Ward asked Darnell to act on the information she had gleaned concerning the false reports about Newman, but Newman came across the letter and took the matter up himself. (Mrs F.R. Ward to Darnell, 13 Sep 1860, BOA)

57. Newman sought the advice of Thynne, who had once had Moody as his curate. Thynne described him as honest but bad-tempered, conceited and forceful, and his wife as having little regard for the truth. He confirmed they had both spoken against the Oratory, the school and all connected with it, including the boys. He realised how injurious it was for the school "to have those about it who do not cordially support it" but believed that, in a way, Moody wished the school to succeed, "but it must be under *his* management and under *his* direction". Thynne was reluctant to say more about one for whom life had been a great struggle against poverty, bad health and loss of friends. (Thynne to Newman, 19 Sep 1860, BOA)

58. Moody to Newman, 23 Sep 1860, BOA

59. However, if Newman thought that the interests at stake were too serious to let it pass, Ward suggested they try to gather written statements. (F.R. Ward to Newman, 26 Sep 1860, BOA) By the time Newman informed Thynne of developments, Thynne had further evidence of the damage: a letter of Mrs Moody "full of abuse of the whole thing". (Thynne to Newman, 24 Sep 1860, BOA)

60. Newman penned a tactful reply to reassure the Moodys of good will and declared he did not want to pursue the matter further. (Newman to Moody, 8 Oct 1860, *L&D* XIX, pp.411–12) Moody complained that he and his wife would now feel the restraint imposed on them by knowing that they had enemies. (Moody to Newman, 9 Oct 1860, BOA)

61. *L&D* XIX, p.411n. Nearly all the Fathers thought Darnell was also involved. (Newman's memorandum, 22 Nov 1862, BOA)

Ransford⁶² was engaged as a tutor and usher. He was "warmly religious", dutiful and with "many good qualities", but a liability as a schoolmaster. He was without "tact, management, or refinement" and was overharsh with the boys.⁶³ When Wilberforce complained to Darnell and St John about a clash with his son, Ransford had already been removed from the younger boys. Newman tried to ease matters by urging trust in the school but admitted that, while "Boys are not ruined in a day", he was "provoked and troubled at his [Ransford's] hacking and hewing the delicate natures entrusted to him".⁶⁴

In partnership with parents and friends

Newman keenly felt the responsibility of parents who were entrusting their dearest ones to the experimental undertaking. It was an "awful responsibility",⁶⁵ "a tremendous anxiety",⁶⁶ a "great mark of confidence",⁶⁷ "a most serious charge to have the care of so many boys, on whom the well being of English Catholicism in the next generation, humanly speaking, materially depends. [...] The greater the act of confidence on your part, the keener is our anxiety."⁶⁸ The transmission of responsibility was manifested in symbolic fashion by the handing over of boys at the start of each term, above all at the start of a boy's school life.⁶⁹

The close contact and confidence between Newman and his friends enabled

62. Edward Ransford (1835–1901) was educated at Durham School, Trinity College, Dublin and St John's College, Cambridge. He became a Catholic but after teaching at the Oratory School and then Oscott, returned to the Church of England where he took Orders.

63. Moody thought he had no idea about keeping discipline. He was frequently provoked by the boys and over-reacted. (Moody's diary, 4 Jul & 11 Oct 1859; 5 May 1860, BOA)

64. Newman to H. Wilberforce, 13 Jan 1861, *L&D* XIX, p.452

65. Newman to Mrs Bowden, 6 Mar 1860, *L&D* XIX, p.474

66. Newman to Pollen, 14 Mar 1860, *L&D* XIX, p.482

67. Newman to Mrs Wilberforce, 15 Jan 1861, *L&D* XIX, p.454

68. Newman to the Duchess of Norfolk, 7 Mar 1860, *L&D* XIX, p.476

69. Newman apologised to Thynne that his absence from the Oratory meant he was unable to "have had Charlie put into my hands by yourself, as you so kindly intended. I feel deeply both the confidence shown me, and the responsibility incurred by me, in such a charge — and assure you that neither myself, nor any of us, should ever view the new School in any other light, primarily, than that of a public institution for the advantage of the Catholic gentlemen of England. We should consider ourselves happy, if we are made the instruments, in the Hands of Providence, of supplying what is on all sides felt to be a great desideratum." (Newman to Thynne, 25 Apr 1860, *L&D* XIX, pp.328–9)

problems to be sorted out. To resolve the clash between their son and Ransford, the Wilberforce parents not only wrote to Darnell but went to the Oratory where they conversed at length with St John. For this Newman was most grateful. "It is the part of a true friend. We cannot get on, unless we know just how things are going." He told them that they should be "perfectly sure that I hold the welfare of the boys committed to me above the existence of the school itself — and would rather they all went, than that they should get harm instead of good by remaining".⁷⁰ It was not clear, however, that Newman managed to make provision for those parents who were not in his circle of friends. As the parental body grew, other means of communication were needed. Newman relied heavily on Bellasis's services as school agent: as a two-way link with parents;⁷¹ recruiting for the school; and dealing with applications.⁷²

Newman's major memorandum of February 1861 is of crucial importance.⁷³ By then the school and the Oratory had been on trial for almost two years, and Newman judged that the Oratory should revert to its former position and demand of Catholic gentlemen the means for providing properly for the school. In founding a school for upper-class Catholics, it was not to be forgotten that, "as that very object implies, the duty and the interest of the undertaking rest with that upper class, and not with the Oratory". Parents had provided £550 for capital expenditure, and the Oratory £7129, of which £4000 had been spent on enlarging and decorating the church for the school's needs.

70. Newman to H. Wilberforce, 13 Jan 1861 & Newman to Mrs Wilberforce, 15 Jan 1861, *L&D* XIX, pp.452–4. Wilberforce was treated very differently by Sewell when his son died at Radley. Sewell blamed him for injuring the school's reputation by sending a weak boy to a boarding school. (James, *op. cit.*, p.278)

71. He kept Newman informed of rumours circulating, such as the charge that boys were allowed into Birmingham unaccompanied. The prospectus declared that "boys are absolutely forbidden to enter the adjacent town, unless under special circumstances". (School prospectus, n.d. [1861], BOA) On Newman's behalf he sounded out parents about changes, such as fee increases.

72. On one occasion Newman asked for information on Corry who wished to send his only son. As Corry's daughters were at school with his, Bellasis was able to provide a brief character reference: his daughters were "nice well conducted girls" and he was a wealthy shipowner, a self-made man. The son was accepted. (Bellasis to Newman, 27 Dec 1861 (second letter), BOA) On another occasion Bellasis arranged an interview with a man from New Grenada who wanted to send two sons. Bellasis had to explain that the school was unsuitable as their main object was to speak English and be qualified for commerce. Besides, they were too old: 17 and 19 respectively. (Bellasis to Newman, 21 Jan 1862, BOA)

73. The memorandum has already been used to explain why Newman and the Oratory took the initiative in November 1858. Then, both sides were holding back, the Oratory waiting for the Catholic laymen to supply the finance and pupils, and the majority of parents wanting proof that the Oratory could run a school. Newman had decided to break the deadlock and "furnish to Catholic gentlemen that trial of our capacity". A copy of the memorandum was sent to Hope-Scott.

While the immediate benefit accrued to parents, he admitted that the Oratory had a considerable interest in the school prospering. There was no more direct way of fulfilling their mission from the Pope than that of "keeping school". It also provided work that suited some Oratorians, while for Newman it "falls under those objects, to which I have especially given my time and thought".⁷⁴

In general, however, other works would have been more suitable for an Oratory. Viewed as a commercial speculation, the school was bringing in an adequate interest on the capital, but for the need to plough it back in, for buildings and new staff. Another drawback was that

The parents of the boys, not only have the direct interest in the school, but also a real power over it. Our dependence upon them is as great, as if they were a committee of management; for they have only to withdraw their children and the school falls to the ground. Of course there is a date in the history of most undertakings, when they are established beyond the power of individuals, however many or influential, to affect them prejudicially; such are not our circumstances at present. A run might suddenly take place against the school; as there is at present a run in its favor.

The reputation and prospects of the Oratory, as well as their capital, were tied to the school. Another element of risk arose from their pledge to "keep school". The small body supplied the headmaster, but if he became ill another Oratorian would have to give up some other engagement to replace him. This reasoning also applied to Mrs Wootten. Then "it might happen we could supply neither Head Master, nor Head Dame to the satisfaction of the parents", in which case the school would collapse. Another scenario envisaged was that "The school might outgrow the place. Or parents might begin to find that we were perfection, had we but a better situation, amid pleasant meadows and upon an available river. After discussion the school goes away from us into the country, with our benediction indeed", but with a loss to the Oratory.⁷⁵

It was unbecoming of the Oratory to engage in financial speculation, but funds had been committed to overcome an otherwise insurmountable obstacle. The school required further investment of £3000-£4000 "to give it a fair chance".

Under these circumstances, we wish to know of our friends, whether they will

74. Newman's memorandum, 5 Feb 1861, *L&D* XIX, pp.463-5

75. *Ibid.*

give, advance, or lend us a sufficient sum for us to proceed with the plans which we have begun with such good promise — and, if so, on what terms. Such a sufficient grant of money on their part, will not only trim the balance of expense, in the prospect of a further outlay, but will also serve as our safeguard against, and our compensation under the contingency of the school going out of our hands into some other locality, or being superseded by some newer institution elsewhere.⁷⁶

Darnell and the masters: setting up a public school

Darnell had effectively assumed control as headmaster by December 1858. Newman granted him a free rein, in accordance with his claim that "my rule has ever been to give a generous liberty to those I put in trust with any work". Assertive, dominant and impatient to see the school develop rapidly, it was not long before Newman realised that "having put power out of my hands, there was no way of getting it back."⁷⁷ Darnell showed initiative and flair. He chose the Winchester Latin grammar which he asked all fathers to buy before their sons arrived. He arranged for the French master to lead French conversation with the boys at meal times. Darnell's enthusiasm for cricket inspired the first school match in the summer of 1861, against Oscott.⁷⁸ To judge by the comments of parents and the efforts made to retain him during and after the crisis, Darnell was a very competent schoolmaster.⁷⁹ Nevertheless, there was considerable disorder in school affairs which Newman attributed to "Darnell letting no one do any thing but himself, and he having no time to spare".⁸⁰ Darnell excluded all Oratorians "from any knowledge whatever of school matters and made the School simply his".⁸¹ Newman had intended

76. *Ibid.* Newman made a practical proposal that friends of the school should advance the sum incurred by the purchase of the playground, namely £1750. (Newman to Hope-Scott, 19 Feb 1861, *L&D* XIX, p.463)

77. Newman to H. Wilberforce, 26 Jan 1862, *L&D* XX, pp.138–9

78. Newman to Northcote, 29 Jun 1861, *L&D* XIX, p.521

79. Lady Thynne thought he had so completely won the "confidence of Parents and the love of the boys" that he would be impossible to replace. (Lady Thynne to Mrs Wootten, n.d., BOA) Scott-Murray considered him the man cut out for forming a public school. (Scott-Murray to Bellasis, 22 Dec 1861, *L&D* XX, p.98)

80. Newman to Allies, 26 Jan 1862, *L&D* XX, p.135. After his first day at the school, Moody commented on the great want of order. (Moody's diary, 4 Jul 1859, BOA)

81. Newman to Monsell, 5 Jan 1862, *L&D* XX, p.110. Newman commented: "Before the catastrophe came, we had been all so kept out of the school, that it was a terra incognita to us." (Newman to J.B. Morris, 26 Feb 1862, *L&D* XX, p.157) Jackson, however, claims that the Oratory School was unable to develop as Rugby or Shrewsbury because Newman was unwilling to grant Darnell the kind of independence Arnold and Butler enjoyed. (J. Jackson, *op. cit.*, p.139)

that the Fathers should care for the boys, "having their direction in spiritual matters and in ecclesiastical functions and devotions",⁸² but Darnell's possessive manner stifled this vital contribution.⁸³

It is not necessary to delve into Darnell's motives to discern the extent to which he was unwilling to cooperate with others. Suffice it to say that his style was autocratic and that he was unable to appreciate the more complex role of headmaster fashioned by Newman, with its modification of conventional power. Darnell's obstructive attitude became apparent during the first term when Newman's request to attend the examinations was refused.⁸⁴ He soon realised that his advice and recommendations were being ignored. Newman's opinion that he was gradually elbowed out of his own school has validity, but it should be tempered by the extent to which Darnell had been delegated the task of running it. Besides, Newman's energies were devoted elsewhere.⁸⁵

Newman noted that Darnell was "ambitious perhaps to have a tip-top school"⁸⁶ and in this lay the problem. He was set on matching the best of the Protestant schools but at the expense of vital aspects of the foundation. As Dessain sums it up, Darnell "concentrated on making it only too like a public school, without the Catholic and indeed human and gentle counterweights, that Newman considered necessary".⁸⁷ Newman was later to remark that, but for the crisis, "the school would have become essentially a Protestant one, if we had gone on, as it was going".⁸⁸ The reason for the bias was patent. Darnell was a convert, and surrounded by converts; Oratorians, masters, dames

82. Decree of the Congregation of the Birmingham Oratory, 21 Apr 1858, BOA

83. Darnell fixed the times for First Communion and Confirmation without consulting the other Fathers, (Trevor, *Light in winter*, p.234) though the prospectus stated that "The Confessors, with consent of the Father and the Head Master, prepare and send boys to the Sacraments." (School prospectus, n.d. [1861], BOA)

84. Darnell had complained that the boys seemed backward in their work, so Newman attributed his refusal to the wish to have the boys more advanced first. (Newman to Mrs F.R. Ward, 8 Aug 1859, *L&D* XIX, pp.188-9)

85. Newman's *Letters and diaries* contain just one reference to the school during the first three terms, besides noting the arrival and departure of boys. Newman even admitted to a parent: "I have no time nor strength to give to the school personally". (Newman to H. Wilberforce, 13 Jan 1861, *L&D* XIX, p.452)

86. Newman to Mrs F.R. Ward, 8 Aug 1859, *L&D* XIX, p.189

87. *L&D* XX, p.xiii

88. Newman to Hope-Scott, 12 Jan 1862 (not sent), *L&D* XX, p.122

and parents. It was natural that they should lay great stress on forming a public school.

Darnell was greatly influenced by parents who discussed the school's progress with him. In his conversations with Scott-Murray "more and more stress on the public school system" was made. Like others, Scott-Murray had understood that the school was virtually independent of the Oratory, and that Darnell could act as independently from it as Newman had done in setting up the Catholic University.⁸⁹ He presumed Darnell intended to leave the Oratory, once the school was flourishing, and move it into the country.⁹⁰ Moody worked on the same assumption.⁹¹ Like Scott-Murray, Thynne thought the school ought to move to a country location if it intended to become a public school. He promised to lobby for a new site so that boys could remain at the school before going to Oxford.⁹² Such ideas coming from a handful of parents encouraged Darnell to develop his own agenda for the school, and probably misled him into thinking that it was representative of the whole parental body.

Darnell's outlook was reinforced by his appointments since all staff appointments lay with him — "not nominally, but really", as Newman deemed "it simply necessary he should be uncontrolled in the matter".⁹³ When Darnell appointed Oxenham⁹⁴ in August 1861 Newman complained that he had not been consulted.⁹⁵ The rule in Newman's constitution required his confirmation for appointments of masters and dames, but this arrangement, like others, had never been enforced.⁹⁶ At the outset Newman had tried to

89. Scott-Murray to Bellasis, 11 Jan 1862, BOA

90. Newman to St John, 30 Dec 1861, *L&D* XX, p.97. It contains an extract of the letter, Scott-Murray to Bellasis, 22 Dec 1861.

91. Moody's diary, 13 Feb 1859, BOA. Acton thought that a physical separation from the Oratory was inevitable if the school continued to grow. (Acton to Döllinger, 17 Feb 1858, Döllinger, *op. cit.* I, p.126)

92. Moody's diary, 18 Apr 1860, BOA

93. Newman to W. Wilberforce, 3 Jun 1861, *L&D* XIX, p.501

94. Henry Nutcombe Oxenham (1829–88) was educated at Harrow where his father was second master. He won a Classical scholarship at Balliol but spoiled his chance of a fellowship by airing his High Church views. After being ordained in 1854 he became one of the founders of the Association for the Promotion of the Unity of Christendom. Manning received him into the Catholic Church in 1857. He tried his vocation at the London Oratory then moved to St Edmund's, Ware. There he received Minor Orders.

95. Newman was worried about having him as a master although Manning had twice sent him to Newman so that he could be given work at the school. (Newman to Lockhart, 25 May 1865, *L&D* XXI, p.467)

96. Minute book of the General and Deputy Congregations, 4 Dec 1860, BOA

find a suitable second master but failed. Moody was Darnell's choice.⁹⁷ He was popular with the boys and respected for his fair treatment of them, but he provided the main subversive element until the arrival of Oxenham. From the start Moody argued that the school ought to be independent of the Oratory, that the headmaster should be the only authority, and that the Congregation should exercise no more control over it than the Provost of Eton over his school.⁹⁸ Although Newman had not welcomed Oxenham's arrival, he came to regard it as providential, "for, though with us only three months, he brought to a head what otherwise would have lurked in the system, felt but not ascertainable".⁹⁹ Rougemont, a French priest who spoke English fluently, taught Mathematics but struggled to keep discipline. Darnell had appointed him against Newman's wish.¹⁰⁰ Marshall¹⁰¹ was a bachelor who was popular with the boys, a good singer and sportsman.¹⁰² Although they both signed the resignation letter, their part in the rebellion was minimal, and they were reinstated.

The school's public-school aspirations were evident in the 1861 prospectus which declared:

Its object is to afford to Catholic youth the benefit of a system of education similar to that of our great English Public Schools, as far as circumstances will admit. It embraces the same classes of pupils, with the same variety of destinations in life, as are met with and provided for at Eton, Winchester and Harrow.

The Masters and Tutors are chiefly persons educated at those Schools or the English Universities, or at both.¹⁰³ [...]

97. Darnell commissioned Pollen to offer a post at the school to Moody. (Moody's diary, 23 Feb 1859, BOA)

98. Bellasis's memorandum: statement of the Darnell trouble, n.d. [Dec 1861], BOA

99. Newman to Hope-Scott, 12 Jan 1862 (not sent), *L&D* XX, p.122. A priest who had been at St Edmund's with Oxenham had anticipated trouble when the school engaged him, as he had a reputation as an agitator against authority. (Hope-Scott to Newman, 9 Jan 1861, BOA) Trevor relates that he was removed from St Edmund's. (*Light in winter*, p.223) Acton described him as "a most pungent and persistent fault-finder". (Acton to Gladstone, 19 Feb 1875, Acton, *Selections from the correspondence of the first Lord Acton*, p.267)

100. Newman to R. Pope, 22 Oct 1862, *L&D* XX, p.320

101. James Marshall (1829–89) was educated at Exeter College, Oxford. He was a curate until 1857 when he became a Catholic. At the age of 16 he lost his right arm in a gun accident. This disability was a "bitter trial" for it debarred him from the priesthood. Before joining the school he acted as tutor for a Catholic family. (W.R. Brownlow, *Memoir of Sir James Marshall*, London, 1890, pp.1–7 & 12)

102. Newman to Woodcock, 28 Mar 1862, *L&D* XX, p.179

103. It only mentioned by name some of the school personnel: Newman as President, Darnell as headmaster, Moody as second master, Rougemont as third master, and Bittleston and Flanagan as confessors. It added

The School-Hours, Order, Discipline, and Books, are those of an English Public School, so far as they are consistent with Catholic habits and requirements.¹⁰⁴

Other than Rougemont, the academic staff were all convert clergymen who had been educated at Oxford.

From the outset Moody had understood that he would be allowed to take in boarders. The prospect was first postponed, while the dames' houses were being filled with younger boys, then begun for a short while, before being abandoned, when the views of Bellasis and Hope-Scott prevailed. Bellasis objected to the system of separate tutors' or dames' houses since they would be independent of the Oratory: "the great thing was to have them under the eye and hand of the Fathers".¹⁰⁵ Hope-Scott recommended a large dormitory. The disappointment of the Moodys helps explain their antagonism to Newman, although Moody had his salary raised from £150 to £300 as compensation.¹⁰⁶

The plans Newman had discussed with Bellasis and Hope-Scott were moved into reality in the summer of 1861. The sight of "expensive and handsome buildings in course of erection, instead of buildings of a temporary character", disappointed Scott-Murray (and the masters)¹⁰⁷ as it indicated that the school was permanently establishing itself in Edgbaston, whereas he considered "absence from Birmingham (a town) part of the very essence of a good Catholic school". Location by a large conurbation "would not allow the boys the freedom of a public school", and he foresaw difficulties if the older boys remained there. Newman's attempted explanation only made matters worse. He agreed

that these were to be assisted by two tutors (Marshall and Oxenham) and by French, music, drawing and drill masters. The three public schools mentioned were precisely those attended by Moody, Darnell and Oxenham.

104. School prospectus, n.d. [1861], BOA. A copy, dated 18 Oct 1861, is used in Tristram, 'The Oratory School', Aug 1932, p.131.

105. Bamford specifies two defects of the boarding or dames' houses which led to their demise: that boys found themselves beyond the power of masters; and that the profits went outside the school, which led to abuse of the system through cupidity. (Bamford, *op. cit.*, pp.194-5)

106. Moody's diary, 13 & 23 Feb, 27 Oct 1859; 15 Mar, 25 Apr, 8 May & n.d. [summer] 1860, BOA and Newman's memorandum, 9 Sep 1862, *L&D* XX, p.269n

107. Acton records that they disagreed with Newman about connecting the school with the Oratory through grand buildings. (Acton to Döllinger, 27 Dec 1861, Döllinger, *op. cit.* I, p.240) The author of *The Oratory School, Caversham, Reading: its history, development and present-day activities* (Gloucester, [1938], p.13) claims that Newman made no effort to erect permanent buildings as he thought Edgbaston was unsuitable as a permanent site for the school. Instead he put up buildings on a more modest scale which would suffice for the needs of the moment.

with Scott-Murray about the problem, suggested there was no remedy — on account the Oratorian Rule — and that Oscott might be the only solution.¹⁰⁸ The episode highlighted the problems of not fully involving all those interested in the project. If a loyal friend could be so easily misled, it is not therefore surprising that others should have become confused and frustrated with the school's development.

Under the influence of Moody, Scott-Murray and Thynne, Darnell began investigating alternative sites for the school.¹⁰⁹ The attraction of greater independence and a rural setting was irresistible, as this would accelerate the attainment of their goal — a public school. It is difficult to ascertain how developed plans were, and the extent to which others participated in them. Moody was undoubtedly a prime mover, as he had always opposed Edgbaston as a suitable site.¹¹⁰ Scott-Murray knew of the scheme, but had assumed that Darnell was acting with Newman's blessing. Neither Newman nor the majority of parents were aware of it, although some Oratorians were. Newman later described the driving force behind the movement as "a distinct tendency, of long standing and recent increase, even if there was not a fixed design [...] to draw the school from under our authority and control, and to form a sort of parasitical body in the Congregation, which may be called 'the school interest', composed partly of Fathers, partly of externs".¹¹¹ The addition of Oxenham increased it and brought matters to a head. So considerable was his influence that the crisis came to be known as the 'Oxenham episode'.¹¹²

108. Scott-Murray to Bellasis, 22 Dec 1861 & Newman to St John, 30 Dec 1861, *L&D* XX, p.97. Newman later attributed his misleading comments to being "in a state of great despondency from having no control over the school, yet seeing many things wrong with it — with a conviction that Fr Nicholas was not up to these wrong things or their removal". He had not intended to exclude a move to the Oratory house at Rednal which was eight miles away and in the country. His comments also reflected his feeling that little boys were easier to manage. (Newman's memorandum, 16 Feb 1862, *L&D* XX, p.98)

109. After the crisis a man reported back to the Oratory with a choice of sites, in response to a discussion he had with Darnell. He recommended one near Henley. (Newman to Bellasis, 5 Feb 1862, *L&D* XX, p.148) Scott-Murray had already suggested Henley, while Thynne had proposed Reading. (Moody's diary, 6 & 18 Apr 1860, BOA)

110. Moody's diary, 27 Mar & 10 Jul 1859; 13 Mar & 2 May 1860, BOA

111. Newman to Scott-Murray, 8 Jan 1862, *L&D* XX, p.117

112. B. Charlton, *The recollections of a Northumbrian lady, 1815–1866: being the memoirs of Barbara Charlton*, ed. L.E.O. Charlton, Stocksfield, 1949; 1989, p.253

Effectively two parties had developed plans for the school independently — the exception was Darnell, who must have been privy to Newman's plans as they had to pass through the Congregation for approval. His part in the conspiracy needs some explanation as he was the focus of "the school interest". He had long been granted generous scope to develop the school and had put his heart into it. Cut off from the main parental body and influenced by those who had a one-sided appreciation of Newman's scheme, he entertained his own plans. There may also have been an element of self-delusion in that he had long presumed on the backing of Newman for all that he did. It is possible that he could not bring himself to face the fact he was not working to Newman's plan. By the time the building works had commenced in the summer of 1861, only to be followed by Newman's sudden questioning of school policy, he resorted to a drastic solution in his confusion.

Parental concerns

On medical advice Newman left the Oratory in July 1861 in order to rest and recover from the strain and insomnia induced by his forced inactivity.¹¹³ In August he wrote to Darnell. Newman warned that the forthcoming six months would be critical as there had been "indications some time past that a trial may be at hand". He listed his concerns. There was so much talking in the dormitories at night that the rule of silence no longer held. This rule and others had now fallen into neglect. They either needed reinforcing or amending, for "if one rule is transgressed, others are also; and general idleness is sure to follow on impunity". Parents spoke of idleness and lack of progress: it had been reflected by poor Easter exams. What system of weekly and monthly repetitions was in place? The end-of-term exams needed to be conducted with more solemnity. Discipline was suspect: he doubted whether one master could enforce it. The sudden influx of older boys from schools with different regimes had contributed to a general slackness. Religious education had been neglected. In particular, the confessors did not have adequate access to the boys: this was after Newman ceding to his request not to have retreats or confraternities.¹¹⁴

113. Newman to Miss du Boulay, 18 Aug 1861, *L&D* XX, p.30

114. Confraternities were devotional associations. The prototype was the sodality, a key element of the Jesuit system. These pious associations in honour of Our Lady had councils made up of boy officials, though led by a priest. The members of the sodality were supposed to be earnest in their desire to lead a good Catholic life and eager to uphold the moral tone of the school. (F. Devas, *The history of St Stanislaus' College*,

In short he hoped Darnell was ready for "his arduous campaign at home".¹¹⁵

Some complaints about the school were aired before the crisis but it was not until afterwards that a full picture emerged, as more parents volunteered information. When pooled, their criticisms and recommendations confirmed that vital aspects of the school had been neglected. It is appropriate to summarise them here. Several complaints emphasised the lack of dormitory supervision: the detailed rules that Newman had written out were evidently ignored.¹¹⁶ It was the responsibility of the tutors, who slept in rooms contiguous to the dormitories, to ensure that "the rule of silence is strictly enforced".¹¹⁷ Other complaints concerned gambling and smoking, which was prevalent among the older boys.¹¹⁸ Darnell was aware of the latter as someone had been caught smoking, but it seems that little was done about it.¹¹⁹

There was concern about the administration of punishments. Wilberforce had complained about Ransford punishing his second son, but on that occasion Darnell had prevented Newman from acting.¹²⁰ Gaisford supported 'flogging' but considered "14 or 20 cuts" too severe. He also objected to floggings before the whole school for small offences.¹²¹ It seems that Darnell was a lax disciplinarian, prone to remitting

Beaumont, 1861-1911: a record of fifty years, Old Windsor, 1911, pp.33-4)

115. Newman to Darnell, 29 Aug 1861, *L&D XX*, pp.38-40

116. A hand-written notice entitled "The Prefect's Dormitory Rules" stated : "1. Silence. 2. No going into each other's rooms. 3. Each boy to dress and undress and say his prayers behind his own curtain. 4. All lights out by half past nine." (1861, Arundel Castle archives, C.581) These must have been among the rules Newman wrote out for Darnell at Christmas 1860. (Newman to Darnell, 29 Aug 1861, *L&D XX*, p.39) A different set of rules stated: "1. Every boy is expected to kneel down at his own chair, and say his prayers immediately on reaching the Dormitory. 2. No talking or Play is allowed in the Dormitories. 3. All leave to miss mass or morning school must be received from the matron over night: in any unexpected illness boys must apply to the tutor. 4. It is forbidden to go to the church in slippers. 5. No boy is allowed in the Dormitory during the day without leave from the tutor." (Five dormitory rules, n.d., BOA)

117. School prospectus, n.d. [1861], BOA. Bellasis had reported complaints that the boys were left unsupervised at night. (Moody's diary, 29 Oct 1859 & 19 Dec 1860, BOA)

118. Sheil asserted that there were few things more pernicious to youth. His son had returned home one vacation in a very different state of health, and he attributed this to his son having acquired the habit from older boys. (Sheil to Newman, 20 Jan 1862, BOA)

119. J. Marshall to Newman, 18 Jan 1862, BOA

120. Newman to H. Wilberforce, 26 Feb 1861, *L&D XIX*, p.470

121. Gaisford cited the practice he had known at Rugby, and that known by Hope-Scott at Eton, which involved a clear distinction: flogging before the whole school was reserved for "a disgraceful or heinous

punishments set by masters but resorting to extreme measures when matters had escalated.¹²² There are no records of complaints about lack of academic progress, however, other than mention of Darnell being remiss in informing parents about the progress of the boys.¹²³

Old Catholics attributed the lack of due spiritual care and instruction to Darnell.¹²⁴ They thought that the confessors ought to have a "more and fuller exclusive jurisdiction" in spiritual matters.¹²⁵ Several parents complained that there were no extra religious activities for boys to attend on a voluntary basis.¹²⁶ The teaching of religion was also unsatisfactory: boys had forgotten their catechism¹²⁷ and were unable to say

offence". (Gaisford to Newman & Hope-Scott to Newman, both 11 Jan 1862, BOA) Mrs Hornyold expressed alarm at the excessive amount of 'birching'. (Bellasis to Darnell, 17 Dec 1861, BOA) The French master wrote the following satirical verse, in the style of Pope, after "One of the most impressive executions":

When lo! Darnell burst in, whose index-hand
Holds forth the virtue of the dreaded wand:
His wrinkled brow a birchen garland wears,
Dropping with infants' blood and mothers' tears.
Over every boy a shuddering horror runs;
Th'Oratory School shake through all her sons.
All flesh is humbled. Edgbaston's bold race
Shrink and confess the genius of the place:
Each pale young offender yet tingling stands,
And holds his breeches close with both his hands.

(H. La Serre, 'Memoirs on the late Cardinal Newman and the Oratory School', n.d., pp.5-6, Arundel Castle archives, MD.2119)

122. Moody thought Darnell was overfamiliar with the boys during school hours. He complained to Darnell about two boys — that it was impossible to continue unless there was "flogging for incorrigibles" — but Darnell let them off. On one occasion Ransford punished about half the school for throwing stones at other boys, but Darnell remitted the imposition given. (Moody's diary, 4 Jul 1859; 17 Feb & 5, 7 & 8 May 1860, BOA) The French master recounts how he once intervened in what appeared to be a riot in the boys' dormitories, and found Darnell in their midst being "pelted with pillows and bolsters". The boys turned on La Serre and forced his retreat, but Darnell seems to have been in control of what amounted to the customary end-of-term pillow fight. (La Serre, *Memoirs*, pp.31-2)

123. Bellasis to Newman, 9 Jan 1862, BOA. There is evidence that there was a certain impatience for quick gains. At one time the younger boys were forced on in their mathematics and made to do algebra, but this had to be abandoned. (Moody's diary, 18 & 20 May 1860, BOA)

124. Hope-Scott to Newman, 7 Jan 1862, BOA

125. Hope-Scott to Newman, 11 Jan 1862, BOA. Gaisford reminded Newman that, according to the prospectus, the confessor, not the headmaster, should be the one to decide when a boy was ready for Confirmation or First Communion. (Gaisford to Newman, 11 Jan 1862 & school prospectus, n.d. [1861], BOA)

126. Bellasis to Newman, 26 Dec 1861, BOA

127. Palmer to Newman, 20 Jan 1862, BOA. The prospectus stated that Newman gave catechetical instruction on Sundays and Darnell during the week. In the spring of 1860 Newman began his catechising

even ordinary prayers.¹²⁸ The prospectus stipulated daily attendance at the "Holy Sacrifice of the Mass", saying the Rosary before dinner and a visit to the Blessed Sacrament after evening lessons, but this was far from a reality.¹²⁹

Reports of this neglect circulated among Catholics and damaged the school's reputation. The suspicion with which the school was viewed is brought out wonderfully in an exchange of letters between Bishop Brown of Shrewsbury and Bellasis, after they met by chance on a train, in October 1862. Brown said that he was sorry Bellasis sent his sons to Edgbaston as the boys there were not brought up as Catholics: he had heard they did not receive proper instruction and were catechised once a week, and inadequately. Bellasis objected to the charge that "The school is not conducted in a Catholic spirit", and a heated argument ensued.¹³⁰

Bellasis later provided Brown with a detailed account of religious instruction. Brown gladly noted arrangements were *now* better. He explained that the interests of the Catholic body were "very much at stake in the rising youth of our higher classes", and that therefore the school was a matter of common concern. His information came from two sets of parents, one of whom had withdrawn their son. One had remarked that if their son had not gone to the school well-instructed, he would not have "learned his religion" there. In both cases the parents were old Catholics and very insistent on proper religious instruction. They had both "tried Edgbaston and know it well — but they do not find it in this respect like our other Catholic Schools".¹³¹ Brown confessed he did not find their reaction surprising. Since the masters and Fathers were all converts, none of those in charge of the boys' religious instruction had "ever learned his catechism" or been through a course of instruction at school. The Oratorians were "very learned and very classical", but were unable to provide proper catechetical instruction. "I may call catechetical

and Moody was instructed to spend 15 minutes each day on reading the scriptures. (Moody's diary, 26 Feb & 3 Mar 1860, BOA)

128. Bellasis to Newman, 9 Jan 1862, BOA

129. School prospectus, n.d. [1861], BOA

130. *L&D* XX, p.313n & Bellasis to J. Brown, 19 Oct 1862, BOA

131. Brown to Bellasis, 5 Nov 1862, BOA. Newman agreed that the complaints were justified, but qualified them: "*They [the boys] are backward in every thing, in catechism among the rest.*" (Newman to St John, 23 Oct 1862, *L&D* XX, p.321)

instruction the *real Tradition* of the Church — those who have never received it can never deliver it."¹³²

Crisis

Darnell made no reply to Newman's letter questioning school policy, either by word of mouth or in writing.¹³³ The fabric of the school began to show signs of strain as Darnell and Mrs Wootten attempted to consolidate their positions. Darnell made inroads into her domain by depriving her of a room and interfering with her servants.¹³⁴ For her part, she refused to undertake responsibility for the infirmary.¹³⁵ No one was better placed than Mrs Wootten to observe the discrepancy between Newman's vision and the line Darnell had adopted. She opposed Darnell's scheme as best she could.¹³⁶ Yet, because she felt too much bound to Darnell, she did not inform Newman.¹³⁷ Instead she resorted to a policy of non-cooperation: she told Darnell she would not fulfil her duty to him so long as he did not fulfil his to Newman.¹³⁸ The policy adopted by the masters was "to undervalue not only Mrs Wootten but Dr Newman himself, and to reduce their

132. Brown to Bellasis, 5 Nov 1862, BOA

133. *L&D* XX, p.40n. Newman was away in London for much of autumn 1861. He returned to the Oratory at the end of September and, along with a week's absence in October, was away again in London at the Bowdens for four weeks, returning for Sundays.

134. Newman's memorandum, 23 Dec 1861, *L&D* XX, p.76n

135. St John recorded her reasons: she felt unequal to the task, and there was a danger to her health and that of the boys in caring for those with infectious illnesses or requiring night nursing. She said she would renounce responsibility for boys sent to the infirmary by the doctor, once the parents had been informed, but she was willing to continue caring for those with ailments such as colds, and had separated off a section of her house for that purpose. (St John's memorandum, 24 Nov 1861, BOA)

136. "She lectured him from time to time and even rated him; when she thought she was dying, she solemnly reminded him of his duty to me [Newman]." (Newman to Hallahan, n.d., *L&D* XX, p.146)

137. McClelland states that she was a "very efficient tale-bearer", that she watched Darnell's every move and reported them back to Newman who encouraged her. ('A Catholic Eton', p.12) His interpretation relies on Darnell's reference to her as "a german Princess regnant with a back way to the Emperors of Russia and Austria when she falls out with Prussia". (Darnell to Newman, 10 Dec 1861, BOA) Newman's comments on the matter suggest a contrary interpretation: "that there has been any whispering going on from her to me or the Fathers, this is so contrary to fact, that a denial might be given to it even in a court of justice. If there was a fault, it was that she told too little." (Newman to Hallahan, n.d., *L&D* XX, p.146) Newman did not become aware of the dispute between Darnell and Mrs Wootten until it was too late. A year before the crisis, Darnell had written Newman a note about the dispute but not sent it. (Darnell to Newman, 2 Jan 1862, BOA)

138. Darnell to Newman, 19 Dec 1861, BOA

interference to a minimum".¹³⁹ The battle had been going on for about a year, but intensified when Mrs Wootten moved into the house next to the Oratory in the summer of 1861. A rift had opened up between her and the masters.¹⁴⁰ She was abused and called names, especially by Marshall, the tutor in her house.¹⁴¹

Darnell and his masters were on the look out for an opportunity to diminish Mrs Wootten's power. It arose in early December when, on successive days, a boy confined to bed was seen out of school with Mrs Wootten's permission. Unable to reconcile the boy's absences with unambiguous medical advice, Darnell requested the boy back in school at once and enclosed a school notice he had issued: "The Head Master will allow no boy who is not on the sick list, to enter a Dame's room on any pretext whatever without leave from his Tutor. No boy on the sick list, can leave his own house and premises without the Head Master's express permission."¹⁴² Mrs Wootten asked Newman how she was to proceed under the circumstances.¹⁴³ She offered to resign, or else to stay "as Matron to the Boys, or Housekeeper over the servants".¹⁴⁴ The new instructions meant she would be unable to fulfil her duties, but if "*Parents release me from these duties to which I have pledged myself*, I can be the sort of dame the new rule calls for". To continue in her old role, certain conditions had to be met: the boys should have access

139. Bellasis's memorandum: statement of the Darnell trouble, n.d. [Dec 1861], BOA

140. Darnell's description, although expressed in the heat of the moment, indicated its extent. Darnell complained: "she has utterly lost my confidence, has thrown contempt and defiance at all my Masters and Tutors, who have ventured within her circle (reaping in return from each enduring dislike and disgust) has treated with scorn such of my intentions in regard to the external working of the school as I have ventured to mention to her, has thwarted them to the utmost by encountering them with embarrassing propositions of her own, has endeavoured to tamper with the loyalty of my boys, as also with the fidelity of my servants — has made house arrangements without reference to me, has scorned dormitory rules with her remarks on their non observance and *in fine* has generally acted as 'plenâ potestate Praefecta', in expressed assurance of indemnity and absolution from Fr Ambrose and yourself." (Darnell to Newman, 10 Dec 1861, BOA)

141. Bellasis to Newman, 1 Jan 1862, BOA

142. *L&D* XX, p.76n. A boy named Cholmeley had sore feet and what appeared to be chilblains. On the day he was confined to bed by the doctor, Mrs Wootten allowed him to go to a bazaar, accompanied by an Oratorian, in order to lift his spirits. He was spotted there by Darnell. (Simpson to Acton, n.d. [Jan 1862], *Oratory School Magazine* CXIX, 1960/61, pp.34–5) The following day Marshall was with Norfolk and other older pupils at the Birmingham Dog Show where they came across Mrs Wootten with Cholmeley. The note Marshall sent Darnell described "the astonishment of the boys" at the encounter, and Norfolk's exclamation: "I say Mrs W. won't F. Darnell be in a wax". Marshall confined himself to noting: "Facts are sufficient without comments". (Marshall to Darnell, 3 Dec 1861, BOA; Darnell to Mrs Wootten, 4 Dec 1861, BOA)

143. Mrs Wootten to St John, 4 Dec 1861 (first letter), BOA

144. Mrs Wootten to St John, 4 Dec 1861 (second letter), BOA

to her in their playtime; boys entrusted to her, needed to be in her houses; and she should have the command of her houses and servants.¹⁴⁵

Newman was alert to the immediate implications of the dispute. If Darnell gave up his post "it would ruin us with the world — if Mrs W[ootten] does it will ruin us with the mothers, and rob us of the *only* real advantage that we have over other schools".¹⁴⁶ St John's first reaction was similar. He wondered "how N [Darnell] intends to meet furious parents".¹⁴⁷ Newman was unsure how to proceed because Darnell regarded him as an unsuitable arbitrator, yet he could not refer the matter to Bellasis and Hope-Scott, because Darnell "fears the fathers and friends of boys, more that he fears me"!¹⁴⁸

Newman urged Darnell to accept Mrs Wootten's conditions, suggesting that rules could be drawn up to allow both of them "to act in their respective spheres without collision": where their provinces overlapped she should give way.¹⁴⁹ Darnell contended that, by focusing on Mrs Wootten's grievances, Newman was avoiding the issue; the "practicability of a renewal, of the entente cordiale" between Mrs Wootten and the rest of the school staff. It was absurd that he should concede her establishment in "independent authority". He was not prepared "to sacrifice the school and my own independent action there as its Head Master (involving of course that of all who are cooperating with me in it) to the hypothetical interests" of two or three boys requiring Mrs Wootten's special care. To achieve a reconciliation and a working relationship, new guidelines for the dames were required. He conceded that a few boys could be assigned to "her special charge". Darnell's remarks about Mrs Wootten were made in his capacity as headmaster. Otherwise he regarded her "as my most unselfish benefactress, my most willing servant, and most tender nurse and second mother". Such extremes of sentiments in one letter betrayed Darnell's impulsive nature.¹⁵⁰

145. Mrs Wootten to Newman, 7 Dec 1861, BOA

146. Newman to St John, 5 Dec 1861, *L&D XX*, p.76

147. *L&D XX*, p.76n

148. Newman to St John, 5 Dec 1861, *L&D XX*, p.76

149. Newman's memorandum, 23 Dec 1861, *L&D XX*, p.82

150. Darnell to Newman, 10 Dec 1861, BOA

Newman's reflex action at the first sign of trouble had been to contact Bellasis: he asked for the advice of himself and Hope-Scott, and anyone else they considered it worth consulting. He confided that he found himself taking sides with Mrs Wootten.¹⁵¹ Meanwhile he reminded Darnell that without his name the school would not be, and that the majority of parents had made him responsible. He rejected Darnell's dismissal of "the right of appeal on the part of subordinates in the school to me as President".¹⁵² Only now did Darnell finally grasp that Newman "intended to inflict Mrs Wootten on the School and me for the future [...] a coordinate jurisdiction — Mrs Wootten supreme in the house — myself in the School". He completely rejected the arrangement and the dame's right of appeal to Newman. As *his* subordinates, not Newman's, their appeal to Newman passed through him. It was unheard of that dames at Eton or Harrow should appeal to the Provost or governors, respectively. No such right existed at Winchester, and there, as elsewhere, it was doubtful whether even the masters could appeal against the headmaster, except for the second master. An insubordinate dame had only two alternatives: to obey her proper superior, or to go — Mrs Wootten ought to do the former. Concession to her demands would be tantamount to a vote of non-confidence in him as headmaster.¹⁵³ In a more restrained letter to Mrs Wootten, Darnell stated that he would regard her stay beyond Christmas as the signal that his services in the school were superfluous.¹⁵⁴ Marshall and Rougemont yielded to pressure from Moody and Oxenham to sign a letter which declared that they would all resign if Darnell did. They presumed they were in a strong enough position to be able to dictate terms, as Newman would be unable to accept a general resignation.¹⁵⁵

Before receiving Darnell's ultimatum, Newman had already had a long conversation with Bellasis and decided to insist on three points, "without which, as first conditions, the school had better not be": Newman was the "immediate Superior of the school", hence communication between Newman and the staff did not necessarily have to

151. Newman to Bellasis, 15 Dec 1861, *L&D XX*, p.81

152. Newman to Darnell, 16 Dec 1861, *L&D XX*, p.82

153. He added that "she is scrutinizing me through an imaginary Oratorian medium of her own, and assuming an impertinent dictatorship to herself". (Darnell to Newman, 19 Dec 1861, BOA)

154. Darnell to Mrs Wootten, 13 Dec 1861, sent with Darnell to Mrs Wootten, 20 Dec 1861, both BOA

155. Newman to J.B. Morris, 26 Feb 1862, *L&D XX*, p.157

pass through the headmaster — a right of appeal to Newman existed, mirrored by his right of supervision over all of them; all property belonged to the Congregation, but Darnell had "kept back certain engagements or leases" — these anomalies had to be removed; confessors had to be "allowed their free influence upon the boys, and not be dealt with in any peremptory manner".¹⁵⁶

Newman put Darnell under obedience not to proceed further until they met, and ordered Mrs Wootten likewise. Before returning to Birmingham he spoke to Mrs Bowden about the crisis. She was able to draw up a list of 14 boys who had shown "remarkable affection" to Mrs Wootten, on account of the notice forbidding them to go to her.¹⁵⁷ Newman passed on this information to Bellasis, who, by reply, asked for the name of a second Bellasis boy to be added to the list.¹⁵⁸ The Bowdens urged Newman to submit to "almost any inconvenience to retain her", so much did they value her "care and tender management".¹⁵⁹ When Bellasis first heard that Mrs Wootten might retire he relayed the news to Darnell, explaining that he had contradicted the rumour. Unwittingly he commented that her retirement would be "a fatal mistake" because, although the school was prospering with masters, it was unable to do without her. He reported that some boys spoke disparagingly about her and suggested Darnell remove the master encouraging them.¹⁶⁰ Macmullen provided a solution to the problem. Since sooner or later the school would have to be divided into upper and lower parts, it was a propitious moment to enact this division as Darnell could assume full control of the upper school, leaving the younger boys under Mrs Wootten's care.¹⁶¹ Bellasis agreed with the strategy and sounded out a number of parents. The reaction was favourable and Newman was informed.¹⁶²

156. Newman to Darnell, 17 Dec 1861 (draft — not sent), *L&D XX*, pp.82–3. Jottings in his diary indicated other areas in need of redress. (Newman's memorandum, 15 Dec 1861, *L&D XX*, p.83n)

157. There were also three other boys who regularly escaped the Sunday evening card playing to see her, although this did not constitute proof that they were equally for her. (Newman to Bellasis, 23 Dec 1861, *L&D XX*, p.84)

158. Bellasis to Newman, 24 Dec 1861, *L&D XX*, p.89

159. Bowden to Newman, 25 Dec 1861, BOA

160. Bellasis to Darnell, 17 Dec 1861, BOA

161. Dulwich College had been divided into upper and lower schools by the Dulwich College Act of 1857. Later the Clarendon Commission recommended a similar division for Eton. (Clarendon Report I, pp.109–10)

162. Bellasis related that he had communicated with Mrs Fitzherbert, Hornyold, Weguelin, Scott-Murray and Ward. Scott-Murray had spoken warmly of Mrs Wootten. Ward revealed that his wife had not been

The meetings of the congregation

Newman decided to resolve the crisis as an internal matter of the Oratory. On 24th December the General Congregation met. Newman presented his view of the situation which he supported by quoting from the manifesto and the Congregation decree sanctioning the plan. The school was his, insofar as it could be separated from the Congregation, and insofar as the "origination and administration can be separated from money matters". The point at issue was whether Mrs Wootten was Darnell's servant. Newman unveiled the compromise solution: splitting the school into two. Darnell would become headmaster of the upper school, with Moody and Oxenham as undermasters but "no Dames in my sense of the word", only servants, appointed by Darnell and with no right of appeal. Newman could become headmaster of the lower school, assisted by dames "in my sense of the word", such as Mrs Wootten. As President, Newman would determine the moment of transfer from lower to upper — at about 13 — taking into account "the particular case, the wishes of parents, and the opinion of the Masters". Dining arrangements would continue as they were, the older boys eating at Miss French's and the younger ones at Mrs Wootten's. Besides providing a way round the impasse, the plan had "in its rudiments been in the idea of various persons from the first" and would, Newman believed, meet with the approval of masters and parents. The meeting adjourned for three days to allow Darnell to consult friends.¹⁶³

Meanwhile Bellasis supplied Newman with Hope-Scott's opinion. Both lawyers appeared to be more alive to the deeper issues, judging by their insights and suggestions. Bellasis considered the underlying issue was one of control. Was Darnell the "real sole acting head", with Newman and the Oratory as nominal superiors in authority, or was he head "in practical subordination" to Newman? Everyone Bellasis had spoken to thought that the link between the school and the Oratory was essential. Hope-Scott judged

entirely happy with the care of her son when ill, but admitted that Darnell had given her the impression that Mrs Wootten was over-estimated. Ward thought that the school should be "under the control of the masters and that it had been too little so hitherto", and that Newman should be more involved. (Bellasis to Newman, 23 Dec 1861, BOA)

163. Newman's 'Paper proposing a compromise', *L&D* XX, pp.85–7. Bellasis recorded that, if necessary, Newman "would acquiesce in and encourage an independent school for boys beyond a certain age, keeping the Oratory school for younger boys only". (Bellasis's memorandum: statement of the Darnell trouble, n.d. [Dec 1861], BOA)

Darnell's view "wholly inadmissible". Newman's name and, to a degree, Mrs Wootten's had brought the school together, not Darnell's. There had to be no doubt who was in charge. The "Wootten case" was a mere incident. It was no good patching it up because the underlying problem of Darnell's "independent action" was bound to resurface. He recommended that the Oratorians go beyond the immediate issue, and address "the question of the continued authority and action upon the school of yourself and the Fathers". Darnell had to submit or to go. It was better to have a clean break than to delay and allow gossip to foment discordance. Sensing that the "independent action" extended beyond Darnell, he recommended that Newman's authority be admitted by all the masters: there was "probably a crisis in the school, upon which its future welfare may depend". Hope-Scott advised against any further airing of the issue with parents and friends of the school, and for Newman to act decisively.¹⁶⁴

Damage had already been done because Darnell accused Bellasis of interfering, by influencing a parent against him. He reminded Bellasis "that I am a public school man, and that I have public school men on and by my side; and that with their assistance, I at least believe myself to be going straight towards our great desideratum in the present day — a public school". He accused Bellasis of taking sides and challenged him to reveal whether he had broached the idea of partitioning the school with "parents or friends of any of our boys who are public school men", as he had with old Catholics. He demanded "the most ample and unqualified apology".¹⁶⁵ To his credit Bellasis was able to reveal that he had spoken to six people, of whom three were public-school men. In the end, it was Darnell who provided the apology, but by then Darnell had committed himself.¹⁶⁶

When the Congregation reconvened, Darnell declared he was resolutely against Newman's proposal and that he would resign instantly unless Mrs Wootten left at once, and hinted that all the masters would do likewise. He dismissed the division of the school as unworkable since buildings would be shared and boys divided arbitrarily.¹⁶⁷ Despite lengthy protestations from Newman, he refused to accept any compromise, even remaining

164. Bellasis to Newman, 24 Dec 1861, *L&D* XX, pp.88-9

165. Darnell to Bellasis, 26 Dec 1861, BOA

166. Bellasis to Darnell, 28 & 30 Dec 1861, & Darnell to Bellasis, 29 Dec 1861, all BOA

167. Simpson to Acton, n.d. [Jan 1862], *Oratory School Magazine* CXIX, 1960/61, pp.34-5

until Easter so as to avoid scandal. The meeting was adjourned until the following morning.¹⁶⁸ Addressing the next meeting Newman summed up Darnell's case: unwilling to compromise, he wished, by his "strong act of supremacy", to prove that he had "supreme power over the school" to the exclusion of everyone else. Newman's case was that the school was his, just as the boys' orphanage was Flanagan's, capable of being taken away or stopped, but, until that time, his. "I believe the parents have entrusted their children to *me*", and "I believe in my heart that Mrs Wootten has been the real cause of its growth". The parents had asked for personal care for the young boys and a liberal education. The two desiderata were to be supplied by Mrs Wootten and Darnell. From the nature of the case, the second object could not be fulfilled so quickly as the first.

The fruit of Fr Nicholas's exertions are to come, and those of Mrs Wootten have been immediate. The great care taken of the persons of the boys, of soul and body, has, in my judgement, been the cause of the success of the school. And [...] in giving up Mrs Wootten, I give up the chief cause of the school's prosperity.¹⁶⁹

Newman argued that the Congregation should decide whether the school was his, "as direct originator of the undertaking", or Darnell's, under the supremacy of the Congregation over them both. He claimed that this very question had been contested between the Moodys and Mrs Wootten all along. He admitted he found it hard to accept that Darnell's view of the school differed from his, yet, "if things were as he would have them", there was a danger of succumbing to harmful effects: "the mode of conducting the great schools of Eton, Winchester etc, necessarily end[s] in subordinating religion to secular interests and principles"; this consequence would ensue but for the dames and spiritual directors. He proposed that they both leave and let the General Congregation decide who the head of the school was.¹⁷⁰

St John argued that they should ascertain the real cause of the "direct formal unyielding opposition" between Newman and Darnell, as the dispute was not caused, but only brought out, by Mrs Wootten. No one doubted she would resign, if asked, but greater principles were involved, and if these were not resolved he suggested the school

168. Newman's memorandum, 4 Jan 1862, *L&D* XX, pp.91-3

169. Newman's 'Second paper with proposals for a compromise', 28 Dec 1861, *L&D* XX, pp.90-1

170. *Ibid.*

be closed.¹⁷¹ Flanagan¹⁷² protested that Newman's claim — that the school was his — was quite new to him, and probably to others too. He had assumed that Newman was "president of the school in virtue of being superior of the Congregation to whom the school belonged", and that when the Congregation sanctioned Darnell as Newman's representative, Darnell became the representative of the Congregation. He conceded that the documents quoted by Newman supported his case, but he asked if it was possible to ignore the "real practical position". The Oratory was pledged to the school, it had invested heavily in it and, in the eyes of the world, was identified with it. In a matter of such vital importance to the Congregation he thought it deserved a voice. He proposed that the question to be decided was whether the loss of Darnell or Mrs Wootten would be the greater blow to the school, and therefore to the Congregation. As a compromise he suggested that Darnell continue until Easter on condition that Mrs Wootten retired until then.¹⁷³

Newman requested time to think and consult friends, but Darnell and Flanagan demanded an instant reply. Newman refused. Eventually they gave way and the meeting was adjourned for a third time. So matters would have rested but for discussion on how best to secure silence (as Newman presumed news of Darnell's resignation was not in the public domain), whereupon Darnell revealed he had made his resignation public the previous night in writing to friends in London. He must have realised how crucial this revelation was, because he declared that he was, after all, unwilling to remain, even if the Congregation decided in his favour. He then produced the resignation letter signed by the masters. The letter was only an aggravating circumstance which Newman ignored as he pounced on the news that the resignation was public. Flanagan's compromise was now

171. St John's paper at the Congregation meeting, BOA

172. John Stanislas Flanagan (1821–1905) left the social life and hunting fields in Ireland to study for the priesthood. In 1848 he joined the Birmingham Oratory, where he was the only cradle Catholic, and was ordained two years later. He and Bittleston were the two confessors to the boys. (School prospectus, n.d. [1861], BOA)

173. Flanagan queried the relation between the school and the Oratory, and summarised what he understood to be Newman's view: the school was only directly subordinate to the Congregation as regards money; otherwise Newman was free to manage the school as he thought fit, just as another Father might manage an orphanage. If this was so, he asked, why had Newman not settled the matter himself, instead of putting it before the Congregation? (Flanagan's paper at the Congregation meeting, BOA)

unacceptable and the meeting finished with little prospect of an amicable solution.¹⁷⁴ Newman immediately accepted Moody's resignation. While Darnell assumed his fate was sealed and though he resigned from the Oratory, protracted attempts were made to persuade him to change his mind.¹⁷⁵ Meanwhile Newman alerted Hope-Scott: "I come to Town to get some Masters etc at once. I must go into the School myself for a while".¹⁷⁶ Miss French had been a great friend and supporter of Darnell. As she agreed wholeheartedly with Darnell, she resigned too, but reluctantly, expressing gratitude for Newman's "generous confidence" in her.¹⁷⁷ Darnell uttered similar sentiments later when he had recovered.¹⁷⁸ This confirms that the crisis was about conflicting visions, not personal differences.

Conclusion

Newman counted on those undertaking the two key roles of headmaster and dame to identify themselves with his vision for a Catholic public school. With the inbuilt bias, due to the preponderance of converts among those associated with the school plan, came the risk that the Catholic dimension would be neglected in striving after the more familiar goal, the establishment of a public school. As events showed, only Mrs Wootten, among the staff, held out for the coherent whole as envisaged by Newman.¹⁷⁹

The crisis was, at root, a battle for control of the school, and hence the right to determine its destiny. It can be viewed in a wider setting as another example of the

174. Newman's memorandum, 4 Jan 1862, *L&D* XX, pp.92-3. McClelland states that Darnell had little alternative but to resign. ('A Catholic Eton', p.13)

175. Darnell to Oratorian Fathers, 30 Dec 1861, BOA. Darnell was with Moody when Newman's acceptance of Moody's resignation arrived, and reacted by writing to Newman to say that he regarded "the conclusion, in regard to myself, as inevitable also". (Darnell to Newman, 28 Dec 1861, *L&D* XX, p.93n)

176. Newman to Hope-Scott, 28 December 1861, *L&D* XX, p.94

177. Miss French to Newman, 28 & 29 Dec 1861, BOA

178. "Need I say that in spite of your infatuation, and my own coldness and pride, I love you from my heart and shall always love you, better if possible, than my own Father." (Darnell to Newman, 28 Dec 1861, *L&D* XX, p.93n) He later admitted that "my conduct was insufferably violent[,] headstrong and conceited generally to the Congregation, and still more insufferably insolent, ungrateful and ungracious to the Father [Newman]". (Darnell to Caswall, 15 Oct 1865, *L&D* XXII, p.75n)

179. McClelland describes her as "a kind of guardian angel" for Newman's interests in the school. ('A Catholic Eton', p.12)

tensions that characterised the Catholic body at the time. Newman found himself between two camps, both of which suspected him of belonging to the other.¹⁸⁰ Those with Ultramontane tendencies suspected him of holding dangerously secular ideas about education. This opposition emanated from outside the school and the Oratory. It was typified by Brown's opinion that the converts were unable to pass on the Church's teaching adequately, and can only have been reinforced by reports of the neglect of religious education in the school's early years. By contrast, those with liberal Catholic tendencies imagined Newman favoured a narrow Catholic education. This small but influential lobby was well represented among the masters, parents and friends of the school. As the proprietors and contributors of the *Rambler* openly backed the school, it was drawn into the escalating confrontation between the journal and the hierarchy. The *Rambler* had clashed with the episcopate over education in 1848–50 and 1856–57. The dispute was reignited in January 1859 when S.N. Stokes,¹⁸¹ uncle of one of the first seven boys, criticised the bishops' handling of the question of state support for Catholic schools.¹⁸²

In striving for unanimity the bishops claimed the sole right to discuss and decide the educational issue. Rather than officially censure the journal, they asked Newman to intervene, as the only *persona grata* to both sides. Just as the school was about to open Newman undertook the editorship. He survived two issues — May and July — before relinquishing duties to Acton. His attempt to exculpate Stokes caused further trouble. His article 'On Consulting the Faithful in Matters of Doctrine'¹⁸³ irritated Ultramontane

180. Ker, *Newman: a biography*, pp.504–5

181. Scott Nasmyth Stokes (1821–91) was educated at St Paul's School and Trinity College, Cambridge. He became a Catholic in 1845. In 1847 he was appointed secretary of the Catholic Poor Schools Committee. After being called to the Bar in 1852, he became one of the Government's inspectors of Catholic schools in 1853, until 1871, when he became a senior inspector. He helped to found Catholic teacher training colleges and was an authority on educational matters.

182. The bishops decided not to cooperate with the Newcastle Royal Commission which was appointed in 1858 to inquire into the condition of education. They feared it would impose Protestant inspections on Catholic schools and thereby subject religious teaching to inspection. They had resorted to this policy after the Catholic Poor School Committee had failed to notice the Commission and secure representation. The policy of non-cooperation risked forfeiture of their Government grant. (Altholz, *op. cit.*, pp.88–91) Stokes's first article, 'The Royal Commission on Education' (*Rambler*, Jan 1859, pp.17–30) was followed up by another, 'The Royal Commission and the Tablet' (*Rambler*, Feb 1859, pp.104–13). He had previously entered the debate with 'The controversy on the Poor-School Committee' (*Rambler*, May 1857, pp.338–48).

183. *Rambler*, Jul 1859, pp.198–230

sensitivities and was delated to Rome for heresy by Bishop T.J. Brown.¹⁸⁴ In the resolution of the matter, a vital letter from Newman to Cardinal Barnabò, Prefect of Propaganda and in charge of English Catholic affairs, was misplaced due to an administrative error. Barnabò came to believe that Newman had refused to explain himself. Newman presumed the matter was settled. It was not. For the next seven years Newman remained "under a cloud" at Rome. Despite his resignation, Newman's association with the *Rambler* led many to regard him "as the leader and guide of a Catholic opposition". In November 1859 Newman made his resignation public, whereupon the readership immediately dropped by 40 per cent.¹⁸⁵

Another controversy began in July 1860 with an anonymous letter from Oxenham to the *Rambler* which amounted to a denunciation of the seminary system. It objected to the separate training of clergy from boyhood, the extensive restrictions imposed on reading, the deficient general education, and the effects of the "vigorous system of police inspection": "the Spartan principle, that there is no disgrace in dishonesty, but much disgrace in being caught", "a slavish and material obedience", the tendency "to make sneaks by the score", the crushing of the affections, and the lack of character formation by "personal influence and discriminating sympathy".¹⁸⁶ As Oxenham buttressed his arguments by using Newman's Dublin lectures and mentioned the example of the Oratory School, Newman felt obliged to respond. He did so by objecting to discussion of clerical education in a lay magazine.¹⁸⁷ He thought that "if the laymen of the *Rambler* wanted the bishops to keep their hands off lay education, they in turn should abstain from criticising

184. Among other things, the article pointed out that during the Arian controversy in the fourth century the majority of the bishops were unorthodox, while the laity remained faithful. Brown's delation to Rome mentioned that both Oratories were filled with converts rather than 'original Catholics', and alluded to them possessing Protestant notions and feelings instead of Catholic instincts. (*On consulting the faithful in matters of doctrine*, ed. J. Coulson, London, 1961, p.37)

185. Altholz, *op. cit.*, pp.113 & 123-4

186. Oxenham argued that the reading restrictions led to "depressed imagination and stunted intellectual development". He asserted that a system based on surveillance would fail to evoke "any moral respect for the authority which commands", unlike one based on confidence and influence.

187. When Newman replied, and signed himself H.O., Oxenham objected strongly that H.O. had misunderstood Newman! When he realised his blunder — that H.O. was Newman — he withdrew from the controversy. Newman's choice of initials was purely fortuitous. (X.Y.Z. [Oxenham], 'Catholic Education', *Rambler*, Jul 1860, pp.248-53; H.O. [Newman], 'Seminaries of the Catholic Church', *Rambler*, Sep 1860, pp.398-401; X.Y.Z. [Oxenham], 'Catholic Education', *Rambler*, Nov 1860, pp.100-17) The first two articles and part of the third are reproduced in *L&D* XIX, appendix II, pp.551-9.

that of ecclesiastics".¹⁸⁸ During the ensuing controversy Simpson reiterated the oft-repeated preference for the Protestant public-school system over the un-English collegiate one, while W.G. Ward vigorously defended the principles of the collegiate system.¹⁸⁹

One issue raised was whether it was the Catholic colleges or the public schools that were the true inheritors of pre-Reformation education, as epitomised by Eton and Winchester. Converts argued cogently on both sides. Oakeley stated that the collegiate system "*aims* at training Christians for the next world, and not for this", while "to speak of the sanctification of the student as the *finis ultimus* of English public-school education, is surely a mere delusion". However, he warned against undervaluing natural virtues and argued that a perfect system would combine both methods of education. His analysis of the statutes of Eton and Winchester illustrated how the structures were "permeated by religion", and were not equivalent to present-day public-school practice plus the sacraments.¹⁹⁰ An anonymous reply made four telling points: Wykeham's statutes made no provision for espionage; the Eton statutes applied to the foundationers, not the great mass of *peregrini*;¹⁹¹ Arnold did not begin but developed a ready-made prefect system; the *onus probandi* over continuity lay with his opponent — the present-day Catholic system was largely based on the (post-Reformation) Jesuit model.¹⁹²

Darnell moved in liberal Catholic circles and, in appointing Oxenham, succumbed further to their influence.¹⁹³ Thus Ker's analysis of the crisis appears correct; that Newman "occupied the middle ground [...] between conventional Catholic educators and those like Darnell who wanted the Oratory School to be as like an English public school as possible". The failure, on behalf of the staff, to grasp the importance of the role of Mrs

188. Dessain, *L&D* XIX, p.xv

189. The affair is recounted in Altholz, *op. cit.*, pp.145–51.

190. 'A.M.D.G.', 'English public schools and colleges in Catholic times', *Rambler*, Sep 1861, pp.346–60

191. Likewise, at the Oxford colleges rules for the foundationers were geared to preparation for the priesthood, not as an educational ideal for the majority.

192. 'A', 'Our public schools and universities before the Reformation', *Rambler*, Nov 1861, pp.119–24

193. His friends included leading liberal Catholics such as Acton, Döllinger, Oxenham, Simpson and Wetherell. Darnell translated Döllinger's two-volume compendium about pagan religion and philosophy before the Christian era, *The Gentile and the Jew in the court of Christ: an introduction to the history of Christianity* (London, 1862).

Wootten was indicative of a more general failure to appreciate the personal and spiritual side of the school that Newman was so keen to emphasize.¹⁹⁴

Darnell's assertive and inflexible attitude was a secondary cause of the crisis because, in preventing Newman's involvement, the possibility of a remedy was withheld. The dispute, like other problems, festered because of Newman's lack of involvement in school affairs. To what extent did this stem from the pressing nature of other commitments, or from Newman's underestimation of the attention the new foundation required? Darnell's obstructiveness obscures this crucial judgement. As regards the day-to-day functioning of the school, there were countless decisions to be made which would ultimately determine its nature as a lay Catholic school. The process required the judgement and acumen of one such as Newman. In founding the university in Dublin Newman had thought long and hard about how to supply the absence of a tradition.¹⁹⁵ Given that his friends were expecting him to adopt a painstaking approach with the school, it is surprising that the crucial task of shaping and forming it should have been delegated. Yet Newman justifiably thought it was easy for people to say, "Oh, Dr Newman has neglected to look after the school", and "rather cool" to ask someone over sixty to do more than "confide the school to a trustworthy person. Such I thought Fr Darnell to be, and they thought so too, independent of me".¹⁹⁶

Newman's line of action during the crisis is worthy of note. He had been effectively cut off from school affairs and, despite the late rally and vigorous liaison with parents, had to form judgements deprived of much relevant information. In defending his vision of the school, he had represented the parents. The sheer pace of events had given him no alternative other than to take decisions on his own without the consultation he would have preferred.¹⁹⁷ Wherever possible he sued for time in order to confer with those

194. Ker, *Newman: a biography*, p.505

195. Newman reckoned that everything in a long-established institution was influenced by the intangible but all-important power he called the 'spirit of the place', or *genius loci*. It "combined in itself the power of discipline with the power of influence, for though its ways were secret and indirect and personal, it had all the authority of law and all the consistency of a living idea". (Culler, *op. cit.*, p.166)

196. Newman to Bellasis, 20 Apr 1862, *L&D XX*, p.190

197. During the dispute Bellasis reckoned that "Newman will do any thing which the parents wish, (or may be supposed to wish, for a general reference to them would not be practicable)." (Bellasis's memorandum: statement of the Darnell trouble, n.d. [Dec 1861], BOA)

he represented. By contrast, he did not consult the Oratorians as he was not acting on their behalf but the parents'. In remaining loyal to Mrs Wootten, Newman remained loyal to the school founders — the parents and promoters who desired a public school that was fully Catholic.

CHAPTER V THE SCHOOL IS SAVED

On 28th December 1861 Newman found himself responsible for a school with 56 boys and no masters which was due to begin term the following 24th January. This chapter is concerned with the rescue operation undertaken by Newman, Bellasis and Hope-Scott during this four-week period — securing masters, reviewing school practice, implementing changes — and the reaction of parents and promoters. It draws upon the correspondence between Newman, Bellasis and Hope-Scott, communications with outgoing and incoming staff, and the reaction of parents and others to events.

Very little has been written about the rescue of the Oratory School. In describing how the sudden change in circumstances galvanised Newman "into an extraordinary burst of activity" as he set to work to repair the damage, Ker makes no mention of the crucial part played by Bellasis and Hope-Scott.¹ Among the historians of Catholic education, only Barnes has alluded to wholesale changes on account of the crisis. He maintains that its innovative schemes were abandoned for conventional arrangements.² McClelland claims that the Catholic aristocracy was divided over the crisis; that Acton and Scott-Murray supported Darnell, whereas Bellasis and Allies backed Newman.³

Whilst the previous chapter analysed the causes of the crisis, this chapter examines its resolution and ramifications. This line of study yields further insights into the foundation. By identifying those who resolved the crisis, it indicates where control lay. It shows how the grave situation was remedied and the damage limited, and discloses what modifications and clarifications were made to arrangements. The outcome is particularly interesting in terms of the balance sought amidst competing visions for a Catholic public school. The crisis provoked parental comment on school practice, including the dame system. The importance of the parental verdict in determining the outcome of the affair emerges. Further observations can be made about the power and influence of the public-school lobby which had forced the pace and spurred Darnell into precipitate action.

1. Ker, *Newman: a biography*, p.505

2. Barnes, *op.cit.*, p.244

3. McClelland, 'A Catholic Eton', p.14

Acton's claim — that the crisis revealed Newman had undergone a profound change in educational thinking — needs to be evaluated. Newman did agree to changes in line with his key concerns. From these alterations his priorities can be disentangled from unwanted but inevitable side-effects.

Crisis management

The Oratory School owed its continued existence to the efforts of the triumvirate — Newman, Bellasis and Hope-Scott — which functioned as a caretaker management committee: engaging new staff at short notice; communicating with the parental body and restoring confidence; limiting the damage the rebel masters could cause, especially loss of pupils; and deciding on changes. Bellasis worked tirelessly in his capacity as school agent, whilst Hope-Scott supplied invaluable advice affecting policy and strategy. Their common work as barristers facilitated liaison on school business.⁴

The three-man committee kept in close contact with each other. Over 50 letters survive from a hectic three-week spell as information was passed on, opinions exchanged and important draft replies or notices circulated. To the first emergency meeting on 30th December, in London, Bellasis brought a strongly worded letter from Scott-Murray which expressed his disappointment in the school. This provoked discussion on important questions. Were they able to have a school for older boys? How many parents felt like Scott-Murray? Should the Oratory apply to Rome for permission for a large school? They drew up a list of possible masters and discussed whether any of the former ones could be received back. Hope-Scott argued against re-engaging them, as they had effectively taken part in a conspiracy, and urged Newman to enter fully into school business.⁵

Newman acted on Allies's recommendations for the posts of first and second

4. They were intimate friends themselves and had worked side by side for many years. Their friendship even extended to praying together. When unaccompanied in a carriage they were accustomed to saying the Rosary, and in climbing the stairs to committee rooms at Westminster they recited prayers, *sotto voce*. (Ornsby, *op.cit.* II, p.195)

5. Newman to St John, 30 Dec 1861 (including extracts from Scott-Murray to Bellasis, n.d. [Dec 1861]), *L&D* XX, pp.97–8

masters; Campbell⁶ and Pope⁷ respectively. On 11th January Pope telegraphed from Gibraltar to accept the post of second master.⁸ He turned out to be a superb appointment and remained at the school for 38 years. Each member of the committee had a part to play in the negotiations to engage Rowlatt⁹. Hope-Scott put his name forward; Newman wrote to offer him the job as Prefect; and Bellasis visited him in London to explain matters.¹⁰ When Campbell declined the offer made him, St John was dispatched to Dublin to secure a first master.¹¹ Newman's 'shopping list' comprised of teachers at the Catholic University, and was topped by the name of Thomas Arnold,¹² the son of the famous headmaster of Rugby, whom he had tried to engage in 1858.¹³ Arnold accepted and St John proceeded to negotiate his loan from the university until Easter, Arnold being unwilling to commit himself for longer unless offered the headmastership.¹⁴

6. Robert Campbell, a convert Episcopalian clergyman, was married with three children.

7. Richard Vercoe Pope (1830–1903) was brought up as a Wesleyan and attended London University. He became an Anglican and went out to India as a missionary for the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. There he married the daughter of a general. In 1859 he became a Catholic. To support his wife and two children, he took up schoolmastering. At the time he was vice-principal of St Bernard's School, Gibraltar.

8. He was appointed until Easter at £100.

9. Charles Robert Rowlatt was an Episcopalian clergyman who converted in 1858.

10. The offer was £50 with board and lodge, until Easter. (Newman to Rowlatt, 31 Dec 1861, *L&D* XX, pp.100–1)

11. Campbell had just been appointed master of the newly opened grammar school in Dublin and felt unable to accept the offer. (Campbell to Newman, 4 Jan 1862, BOA)

12. Thomas Arnold (1823–1900) had been educated at Rugby and Winchester, and was a Scholar at University College, Oxford. He became a Catholic during his stay in Tasmania where he was an inspector of schools. Newman had appointed him Professor of English Literature at the Catholic University.

13. Arnold declined Newman's original offer of a mastership for various reasons: his professorship allowed him more free time; his pay was less than the £300 offered, but he hoped to pick up private pupils; he was enthusiastic about the Catholic University's prospects, for the success of which he thought it worth enduring "much privation"; and he saw "no future, no likelihood of promotion" at the school. (Arnold to Newman, 1 May 1858, BOA) Seven months later, Arnold had warmed to Newman's offer. (Arnold to Newman, 3 Dec 1858, BOA) At the insistence of some promoters Newman was prepared to ask him again, despite the risk of appearing to poach him from the university, though Newman knew that his position there was insecure. Newman's revised offer was £300 p.a., with £50 removal expenses and an incentive of £5 p.a. for "each boy over the number of 20 lasting for a year". (Newman to Arnold, 3 Dec 1858 (not sent), *L&D* XVIII, pp.543–4) It seems Newman had second thoughts about the offer because of his unease over the financial viability of the school plan.

14. His duties were described as six hours Latin and Greek a day, together with "looking over exercises *out* of school". (Newman to St John, 6 Jan 1862, *L&D* XX, p.111) While in Dublin, St John visited Campbell to enquire whether he could join the school at Easter. St John described him as likeable but unsuitable as first master: he did "not *look* a gentleman but a schoolmaster"! As a "painstaking laborious looking man[,] a capital grinder", St John thought he could replace Moody and would move if offered £250. (St John to Newman, 9 Jan 1862, BOA) This matched his present salary of £150 plus the £100 he earned from private pupils.

Two of the rebel masters repented and asked to be reinstated. The committee had doubts about doing so, foreseeing the problems this would give the new headmaster, yet they also realised the importance of breaking up the 'coalition', as this would reduce the impact of the rebellion and provide the school with much needed continuity. Rougemont apologised first, and attributed his action to the pressure exerted on him, pleading his ignorance of the character of English schools.¹⁵ After a "very proper letter" to Newman, he was received back.¹⁶ Although Newman was against receiving any such overtures from Marshall, Bellasis was inclined to think otherwise, except that his antipathy for Mrs Wootten remained. Marshall's third letter to Newman seems to have tipped the balance in his favour, and the committee agreed to take him back.¹⁷ La Serre, a French priest from St Omer, continued as tutor and French master.¹⁸ Thus a full complement of masters was found within a fortnight.¹⁹ Miss Mitchell,²⁰ a former governess for a friend of Newman, replaced Miss French. Mrs Ward had explained what her duties would involve before she applied to Newman.²¹ Significantly, Newman interviewed her personally. He emphasised the responsibility her job entailed as she would be independent, with her own servants at her command and a salary, and under no one but one of the Fathers.²² Though she was 44, Newman thought she looked too young, but she felt confident the boys would not be "uppish with her".²³

15. Rougemont to Newman, 2 Jan 1862, BOA

16. Newman to Bellasis, 5 Jan 1862, *L&D XX*, p.107

17. Marshall expressed his reluctance to return as tutor in Mrs Wootten's house and explained that he felt honour bound to see Darnell before accepting the offer, which he did on 10th January. (Marshall to Flanagan, 2, 4 & 8 Mar 1862; Marshall to Newman, 6, 8 & 10 Jan 1862, BOA) Newman added an extra condition: "Masters not to smoke." (Newman to Marshall, 10 Jan 1862, summary recorded on Marshall to Newman, 10 Jan 1862)

18. While the *L&D XX* (p.601) states he arrived in January 1862, his memoirs confirm he arrived two years earlier. (La Serre, *Memoirs*, Arundel Castle archives, MD.2119) *The Day book* (17 Dec 1861, BOA) reveals he was French master at the time of the crisis, though he did not feature in it.

19. Rowlatt and Butler had to be informed that their services were no longer required.

Robert Jackson Butler was educated at Brasenose College, Oxford. He became an Anglican clergyman and Warden of the House of Charity, Soho, before becoming a Catholic in 1850.

20. Sophia Mitchell had been a governess of the older children of Mrs W. Froude, then housekeeper of Archdeacon Froude.

21. Miss Mitchell to Newman, 4 Jan 1862, BOA

22. Newman to Miss Mitchell, 6 Jan 1862 (summary), written at the end of the letter, Miss Mitchell to Newman, 4 Jan 1862, BOA

23. Newman to St John, 15 Jan, *L&D XX*, pp.127-8

One of the most complex matters the committee had to address was the necessity of communicating with parents, deciding what to tell them, when and how. As the situation kept changing, their cautious approach paid dividends. After his resignation Darnell visited parents and friends, and spoke about taking boys to set up a rival school. In the context of the mid-nineteenth century this would have been the normal course of action for a man in his position, except that he was a subject of the Oratorian Congregation. His visits were, in part, an attempt to apply leverage so that the five rebel masters could be reinstated, and undoubtedly a means of saving face by telling his version of events.²⁴ The rebel masters met on 2nd January and discussed whether to communicate jointly with the parents. Rougemont and Marshall objected. Darnell was unhappy too, and distanced himself by staying away from the next meeting on 4th January. Moody and Oxenham printed a manifesto to parents, but without Darnell's signature it lacked credibility, and over the following weeks they tried in vain to persuade him to sign.²⁵

It was obvious to the committee that neither Moody nor Oxenham could return. Darnell's case posed problems. He was a priest of the Oratory and Newman was his superior. He asked to be released from his obligation to the Oratory but three days later suspended his request.²⁶ His behaviour continued to be unpredictable. Although Ker asserts that Newman had no intention of reinstating him,²⁷ the facts suggest he was undecided. The Pollens tried their utmost to convince Darnell to return to the Oratory. They were in close communication with Newman and Bellasis, and asked the committee to try to keep him nominally in office by sending him away for six months and reorganising the school in his absence.²⁸ Indications that Darnell was undergoing a change of heart led Hope-Scott to advise against issuing any list of staff until the new term

24. Newman to Bellasis, 2 & 3 Jan 1862, *L&D* XX, pp.101-2 & 104-5

25. Bellasis to Newman, 4 (third letter), 6 & 8 Jan 1862; Bellasis to Hope-Scott, 6 Jan 1862; Moody's diary, 7 Jan 1862, all BOA. The manifesto was "partially issued, when friends of ours in London managed to stop it", Newman recorded. (Newman to Lockhart, 15 May 1865, *L&D* XXI, p.467)

26. Darnell to the Fathers of the Birmingham Oratory, 30 Dec 1861 & Darnell to Newman, 2 Jan 1862, both BOA

27. Ker, *Newman: a biography*, p.506

28. Bellasis to Newman, 4 Jan 1862 (third letter), BOA

was under way.²⁹ Newman envisaged, after six months, Darnell "returning to his post, *if he would* — or else, attempting something in the way of an incipient upper school under him to be placed near Rednall".³⁰

Hopes for Darnell's return soon receded. Bellasis correctly diagnosed the problem: "he is so weak that the last speaker has him".³¹ Other friends of Darnell had managed to counter the efforts and arguments of the Pollens. Meanwhile Pollen volunteered the uplifting news that not one of Darnell's London friends was backing him in the dispute.³² Nevertheless Newman was wary that Darnell might continue to see parents and attempt to siphon off boys for a school of his own, and so the threat of a rival school lingered on. Although Moody was accepted by Northcote to teach at Oscott, he continued "agitating" with Oxenham.³³ Events moved quickly. Darnell was granted six months' leave from the Oratory, which he accepted. Once Arnold and Pope were engaged, a list of staff was printed for circulation to parents. Arnold, Pope and Rougemont were identified as first, second and third masters respectively. As in previous lists, the tutors and dames were unnamed.³⁴

Newman was keen to send this information out because he wanted to use the opportunity of advertising "so great a gun as the son of Dr Arnold". He thought that if it accompanied the bills it would help dissuade parents from giving notice to withdraw their sons at Easter.³⁵ Hibbert³⁶ urged the committee to circulate all parents with

29. Hope-Scott to Newman, 6 Jan 1862, BOA

30. Newman to Hope-Scott, 5 Jan 1862, *L&D* XX, pp.108–9

31. Bellasis to Newman, 8 Jan 1862, BOA

32. Bellasis to Newman, 6 Jan 1862, BOA

33. Darnell was still in contact with the pair, and apparently used the term "no surrender" in a letter. (Bellasis to Newman, 8 Jan 1862, BOA) Moody remained at Oscott until 1873.

34. It began: "Circumstances having suddenly made it necessary to re-arrange the educational staff of the School, it has been thought respectful to the Parents and Friends of the Pupils to issue a list of Masters, etc., as they stand at present." (List of staff, 13 Jan 1862 (sent to parents on 18 Jan 1862), BOA)

35. Newman to Hope-Scott, 8 Jan 1862, *L&D* XX, p.114

36. John Hubert Washington Hibbert (1805–75) of Bilton Grange became a Catholic in 1849. In 1839 he married Julia Talbot, an old Catholic, mother of the 17th Earl of Shrewsbury and daughter of Sir Henry Tichborne, eighth baronet. He was Captain in the 1st Dragoon Guards.

authentic information about the changes to quash the rumours circulating.³⁷ Newman considered issuing a few lines restating the aims, "the object of the School being to unite the system of the English Public Schools with the careful personal training which is a first necessity with Catholics". He was concerned that they might be forced to make a public statement if Darnell and his supporters appealed to parents.³⁸

Arrangements for the start of term needed making. Gaisford and Hope-Scott favoured delaying a week but Newman was adamant that a delay would gain them nothing.³⁹ On 18th January parents were sent their bills, a list of staff and a printed circular letter. Newman explained that several parents had requested clearer arrangements for the start of term, as the existing confusion made some unwilling to send them to a partially filled school. In future the day of return was to be "imperative", but in view of the short notice being given Newman declared that Monday 27th January would be the *last* day of return.⁴⁰ Parents were quick to welcome these new arrangements as a considerable improvement on the previous unsatisfactory state of affairs.⁴¹ On 24th January all the masters were in place ready to receive the boys. By night prayers on 27th January the schoolroom was full. With the exception of boys who were ill, only one was missing, and notice of his withdrawal, on account of excessive punishments meted out by Darnell, had been given the previous term. The parents had not only given Newman their full support but had gone to some trouble to cooperate with the new arrangements. There were several new boys too.

Hope-Scott's advice

The committee was *de facto* dissolved once term began. The immediate goal, the rescue

37. Hibbert to Newman, 11 Jan 1862, BOA

38. Newman to Hope-Scott, 12 Jan 1862 (not sent), *L&D* XX, p.122

39. Newman to Hope-Scott, 13 Jan 1862, *L&D* XX, pp.126-7

40. Newman to the Duchess of Norfolk, 18 Jan 1862, *L&D* XX, p.130. Newman's insistence on a coordinated start to an academic session had been in evidence at Oxford. As a tutor at Oriel, he proposed that undergraduates be admitted once a year, all together. Previously new college members were admitted three times a year, or more often. (Culler, *op. cit.*, pp.64-6)

41. Weguelin to Newman, 19 Jan 1862; Towneley to Newman, 23 Jan 1862; H. Wilberforce to Newman, 24 Jan 1862; Mostyn to Newman, 26 Jan 1862, all BOA

of the school, had been achieved, and in a manner beyond their expectations. Yet the committee did much more than patch up: it also addressed the deeper issues. Newman had realised that early difficulties were to be expected — "such catastrophes take place in all nascent and inchoate institutions"⁴² — and the mid-nineteenth century had more than its fair share of young institutions that struggled for an identity and life. More remote from the catastrophe than Newman and Bellasis, Hope-Scott was alert to the purgative effects of the crisis. He sensed that "this disturbance, painful in all ways, may be the appointed means of determining the future character of the School".⁴³ It was "an opportunity for bringing into play, for the benefit of the school, all the lessons which experience has taught: and probably alone could teach".⁴⁴ Many of the insights that led to a re-formation and reorganisation of the school issued from his fine mind. During these critical weeks Newman constantly sought his counsel.

To enable his closest friends to help him resolve the crisis, Newman had to provide a clear picture of its origins. To this end he compiled a selection of the important documents relating to it and provided some connecting narrative of his own. Hope-Scott was the first to inspect this.⁴⁵ On the evidence submitted to him, Hope-Scott's verdict was that Mrs Wootten had acted reasonably. It was plain that Darnell and some of the masters had been "gradually framing a new constitution for the school, different from that announced in the prospectus, and having a distinct tendency to withdraw it, at no distant period, from all real connection with the Oratory". A crisis would have occurred without Mrs Wootten. To avoid confusion about the relationship between the school and the Oratory, one principle arising from the affair was clear. "If the Oratory is to lend its name and incur responsibility, the Congregation must be supreme; and so far as individual Oratorians take part in its management, they must do so with the constant sense that they

42. Newman to Ornsby, 31 Jan 1862, *L&D* XX, p.143

43. Hope-Scott to Newman, 4 Jan 1862, BOA

44. Hope-Scott to Newman, 5 Jan 1862, BOA

45. The collection contained the following: School prospectus, 21 Feb 1859; Mrs Wootten to Darnell, 7 Dec 1861; Darnell to Newman, 10 Dec 1861; Newman to Darnell, 16 Dec 1861; Darnell to Newman, 19 Dec 1861; Newman to Darnell, 20 Dec 1861; Newman's 'Paper proposing a compromise', 24 Dec 1861; conditional resignation letter of the masters, 19 Dec 1861, presented to Newman on 28 Dec 1861; explanation for the following letters — Darnell to Newman, 28 Dec 1861; Newman to Darnell, 28 Dec 1861; Newman to Darnell, 29 Dec 1861; Newman to Darnell, 11 Jan 1862; Darnell to Newman, 12 Jan 1862; Newman to Darnell, 13 Jan 1862. ('1861-2, Darnell, no.2 selection of primary documents, chiefly in no.1 sent up to Hope-Scott & other friends', BOA, 85.2)

are merely officers of that body."⁴⁶ This would eliminate a perception of the school which led to Marshall speaking of "*our* Headmaster" and, more seriously, Darnell's reference to "*my* Masters".⁴⁷

Hope-Scott's considerations led Newman to change the school's name. Before the crisis it had appeared on prospectuses as "Edgbaston Catholic School", but afterwards "School of the Oratory, Edgbaston" or "the Oratory School" was used.⁴⁸ This reflected a change of control, from the school as an undertaking of individuals — Newman and other specified Oratorians — to one of a body, the Oratory. Given that Hope-Scott's mind was "Steeped and penetrated with medieval ideas on the subject" of educational foundations, it is not surprising that he had recourse to an 'old solution'.⁴⁹ In putting safety first and yielding to an arrangement that was tried and tested, Newman was retreating from grappling with a 'new solution', such as Scott-Murray's — the school being "independent of the Oratory as a body, and even possibly in lay hands".⁵⁰ Newman sent Bellasis and Hope-Scott his draft replies to Darnell and Marshall. Besides suggesting modifications, Hope-Scott urged Newman not to miss the opportunity of replying more fully on the question of authority, "so as to lay the foundation of a better system hereafter". He argued that it was as important for new masters as it was for those returning.⁵¹

Hope-Scott's analysis of the affair was masterly, and Newman relied on it for numerous explanatory letters. Hope-Scott opined that Newman's proper consideration of the dispute had been rendered impossible by the precipitate action of Darnell and his

46. Hope-Scott to Newman, 4 Jan 1862, BOA

47. Hope-Scott to Newman, 5 Jan 1862, BOA. In a similar vein, Acton had begun to refer to the school as "Darnell's school". (Acton to Döllinger, 4 May 1861, Döllinger, *op. cit.* II, p.205)

48. "School of the Oratory, Edgbaston" was used for the first time on the printed list of staff. (13 Jan 1862, BOA) Newman first used "the Oratory School" in writing to Darnell. (Newman to Darnell, 3 Jan 1862 (not sent), *L&D* XX, p.105) though he had once used the expression previously in the heading of a memorandum. (Newman's memorandum: the Oratory School, 30 May 1860, *L&D* XIX, p.348)

49. Ornsby, *op.cit.* I, p.275. Hope-Scott had previously advised Bellasis that, since education best thrives under an order, if Newman were to take the lead it should be an Oratorian school. If that were not possible, the promoters "must take what is next best". (Hope-Scott to Bellasis, 13 Feb 1858, BOA)

50. Scott-Murray to Bellasis, 22 Dec 1861, *L&D* XX, p.98

51. Hope-Scott to Bellasis, 5 Jan 1862, BOA

masters, and that they were therefore the cause of the scandal and disorder. Newman's authority had been undermined. The school had been founded by him, with the assent of the Congregation, on the principle that it depended on the Oratory and was under him as its chief. He had allotted the house to Mrs Wootten and the schoolroom to Darnell as "coordinates" under himself. Darnell's claim, that Mrs Wootten and the whole school were under him, was a departure from this idea. It was painfully illustrated in the combined attempt by Darnell and the masters "to dictate terms to you [Newman] and the Congregation". The question of defining the limits of jurisdiction lay ultimately with the Congregation. Darnell's action was subversive not only of the primary idea of the school, but of the discipline of a religious body, in trying to win the dispute by force. The question of Mrs Wootten's position was subordinate to the question of authority. In his view, Darnell could not complain if others should interpret his claims and acts as a deliberate intent to withdraw the school, "morally if not locally", from its dependence on the Oratory.⁵²

Hope-Scott reacted favourably to the news of Darnell's changed attitude, and the proposal to send him away for six months and meanwhile reorganise the school. It would enable Newman to form the school on his own lines, and permit Darnell to return to run it. He advised against adopting Scott-Murray's plan — Mrs Wootten asking for six months' leave for reasons of health — as it was likely to prolong the uncertainty and provide fresh disruptions. Newman was master of the situation and should not surrender his position. The separate question of an upper school, favoured but not founded by the Oratory, and at some distance from it, would be best postponed.⁵³

Hope-Scott thought the Oratory "should supply the whole *authority*", and do so by providing a president and vice-president, or Prefect of Studies. Under them would come the senior and junior masters.⁵⁴ This view was endorsed. The new staff list gave the names and titles of four Oratorians before those of Arnold, Pope and Rougemont.

52. Hope-Scott's memorandum, 5 Jan 1862, BOA

53. Hope-Scott to Newman, 6 Jan 1862, BOA

54. Hope-Scott to Bellasis, 31 Dec 1861, BOA

Newman was proclaimed Prefect of Studies and Discipline, Neville⁵⁵ Prefect of Dormitories and Playground, and Flanagan and Bittleston⁵⁶ Spiritual Directors.⁵⁷ Thus masters and tutors were replaced by Oratorians in supervising dormitories and the playground.⁵⁸ The terminology and structure brought about a closer resemblance to the Catholic colleges. The staff list did not indicate who the real headmaster was. Hope-Scott thought it did not matter if it was Newman or not: the important point was for the Oratory to "*go at it*".⁵⁹ Hope-Scott later added a strong proviso: "It is most desirable that for the future, however little *you* may actually do in the school itself, *you* should know, day by day, and in detail, what is being done."⁶⁰ Hope-Scott's suggestion that St John become headmaster was only implemented at the start of term. In the next prospectus he was declared "Vice-Prefect (*ad interim*)".⁶¹

Hope-Scott advised Newman to investigate comments he had heard from old Catholics that attributed to Darnell the "want of due spiritual care and instruction" and the excessive use of corporal punishment.⁶² In reorganising the school, he recommended that Newman define very carefully Mrs Wootten's future position. He thought the strong outcry against her suggested an error of judgement and temper on her part. Enquiries needed to be made.⁶³ He had heard from people outside the school that her influence was too great. The school was "assuming a new character — too old and too extensive for anything like a female preponderance in the management".⁶⁴ Newman replied that he was

55. William Paine Neville (1824–1905) was educated at Winchester and Trinity College, Oxford. He became a Catholic in 1851 and entered the Oratory the same year, becoming a priest in 1861.

56. Henry Bittleston (1818–86) was educated at St John's College, Oxford and became an Anglican curate. Newman received him into the Catholic Church in 1849 and he joined the Oratory.

57. List of staff, 13 Jan 1862 (sent to parents 18 Jan 1862), BOA

58. An earlier prospectus stated that "a Master or Tutor is also present at Study and in the Playground". (School prospectus, n.d. [1861], BOA)

59. Newman to St John, 30 Dec 1861, *L&D* XX, p.99

60. Hope-Scott to Newman, 7 Jan 1862, BOA

61. School prospectus, n.d. [spring 1862], BOA

62. Hope-Scott to Newman, 7 Jan 1862, BOA

63. Hope-Scott to Newman, 5 Jan 1862, BOA. An indication of her strong personality occurs in La Serre's *Memoirs* (p.28) which reveals how adept she was in talking masters out of the punishments they had given her boys, typically with the excuse: "He is such a delicate boy."

64. Hope-Scott to Newman, 7 Jan 1862, BOA

"alive to the necessity of keeping her under great restraint".⁶⁵

The previous school prospectus had stated: "The houses are superintended as at Eton, etc., by Tutors and by Dames. The latter are Ladies of experience in the care of boys."⁶⁶ The new prospectus read: "Especial attention is paid to the diet, health, and comfort of the boys; who are committed to the care of Ladies experienced in such duties, and are lodged either in the Oratory Building, or in houses in its immediate neighbourhood."⁶⁷ Reference to the Eton dame system had been dropped, but otherwise there was no change in nomenclature, as Newman continued to use the term 'dame'.⁶⁸ The dame's role appears to have remained intact, despite Barnes's claim to the contrary.⁶⁹ Hope-Scott may have had a hand in another significant change. The old prospectus referred to three public schools: Eton, Winchester and Harrow. The new version had Rugby in place of Harrow. Two explanations can be given: the arrival of Arnold, a Rugbeian, and the departure of Oxenham, a Harrovian; and Hope-Scott's opinion that Rugby had a healthy mix of classes.⁷⁰ While still claiming to offer "the advantages of the great Public Schools of England", the revised prospectus alluded to "the evils which are incidental to the system therein pursued".⁷¹

The committee suspected that Darnell must have viewed the school as a private

65. Newman to Hope-Scott, 8 Jan 1862, *L&D XX*, p.115

66. School prospectus, n.d. [1861], BOA

67. School prospectus, n.d. [spring 1862], BOA. The last phrase was altered to "adjacent to it" in the next printing. (School prospectus, n.d. [summer 1862], BOA)

68. His circular to staff in Dec 1862 was headed "To the Masters, Tutors, and Dames of the Oratory School". (*L&D XX*, p.365) As before the crisis, he used 'dame' and 'matron' interchangeably. (Newman to Hope-Scott, 8 Feb & 22 Jun 1863, *L&D XX*, pp.407 & 478)

69. After the crisis Newman observed: "There will always be *some* opposition between Masters and Matrons, for their duties lie in different directions; the one wish to bring on the boys in their studies, and the other have to take care of their souls and bodies." (Newman to Miss Hallahan, n.d. [Jan 1862], *L&D XX*, p.146) The same 'division of labour' is implied in his circular to the school staff. (19 Dec 1862, *L&D XX*, p.365) The financial arrangements for the "Dames' Establishments" continued with "each supreme in her own place". (Newman to Hope-Scott, 22 Jun 1863, *L&D XX*, p.478) Although Barnes claims Mrs Wootten was no longer really a dame after the crisis, he admits she was not a mere matron either. (Barnes, *op.cit.*, p.244)

70. Hope-Scott to Bellasis, 7 Feb 1858, BOA. Further evidence of Hope-Scott's view is supplied by Acton's reference to him having "got a crotchet about the aristocratical character of the school". (Acton to Simpson, 1 Jan 1862, Acton, *Correspondence of Lord Acton and Richard Simpson II*, p.248)

71. School prospectuses, n.d. [1861] & n.d. [spring 1862], BOA

venture run by himself, not a public institution attached to a body, the Oratory. Confirmation came when Bellasis asked Scott-Murray to try to prevent Darnell and the masters from writing to parents. Scott-Murray refused. He declared that he had always considered the school as "independent from the Oratory", and that Darnell's position with respect to the school was the same as Newman's had been at the Catholic University.⁷² From these premises Scott-Murray made various deductions: as the boys were entrusted to the headmaster, *he* was the one responsible to parents; no other master should communicate with the parents except the headmaster; Bellasis's letter to Scott-Murray suggesting upper and lower schools was an act of interference. Scott-Murray revealed that he had regularly discussed his views with Darnell. It was obvious to Bellasis that "those views have been the origin of the whole difficulty, Darnell imagining that other parents partook of them".⁷³

Newman consulted Hope-Scott on the longstanding dispute concerning the licitness of the Oratory having a school, sending him the relevant sections of their Brief of Institution and Decrees, along with explanations of his own.⁷⁴ Newman thought that an 'independent school' would have been an infraction of Decree LXX⁷⁵ as it entailed

72. The comparison with Newman at Dublin was invalid, according to Hope-Scott, because then Newman had obtained an exemption from Rome for three years, after which the Congregation had recalled him to Birmingham. "To make a parallel with the Dublin University you must suppose an Oratory at Dublin — that Oratory to found an University and to depute one of its members to be President, issuing such a Prospectus as you did for the School — A case very different from the real one." (Hope-Scott to Newman, 13 Jan 1862, BOA)

73. Bellasis to Newman, 11 Jan 1862, BOA

74. Newman to Hope-Scott, 8 Jan 1862, *L&D* XX, p.114. Opposition to the foundation from within the Birmingham, as well as the London, Oratory centred on the contention that teaching was not part of the Oratorian vocation. Most of the London Fathers were against anything to do with a boarding school. One of them had declared he would leave the Oratory rather than teach at St Wilfrid's. (Addington, *op. cit.*, p.152) In 1860 Hope-Scott reported that several members of the London Oratory said it was against their Rule to have a school. (Newman to Hope-Scott, 20 Dec 1860, *L&D* XIX, p.443)

75. *Decretum LXX: Cum sint multi in Ecclesia Dei, qui audiendis Monialium confessionibus aut dant operam, aut dare optime possunt; propterea nequis ab instituto Congregationis nostrae proprio possit abduci, statutum est, ne nostrorum aliquis sese obliget aut dedat confessionibus audiendis, moribus reformandis, rebusque earum gerendis. Idem dicimus de Seminariis, Collegiis, Congregationibus, Societatibus, aut aliis Universitatibus, rebusve earum, sine gravi necessitate, tractandis.*

Rough translation: As there are many in the Church of God who either hear confessions of nuns or can do so well; therefore *lest anyone might be taken away* from the *proper purpose* of our Congregation, it is ordered that none of our people should commit or dedicate himself to hearing their confessions, reforming their behaviour or performing other tasks for them. We declare the same about running Seminaries, Colleges, Congregations, Societies and other *Universities*, or things pertaining to them, *except in the case*

setting up "a substantive body". Instead he had intended to establish "a mere dependance and function of the Oratory".⁷⁶ Decree LXX stated that no-one could be taken away from an Oratory by such tasks as universities or colleges, except in the case of grave necessity. The Birmingham Fathers considered themselves exempt because:

1. the school is in no sense an *Universitatis*, or established body or corporation.
2. no one is or can be *abduci* [taken away], by means of it, from the institution of the Oratory — inasmuch as the Father, who is a Schoolmaster, in fact does take his part, as any other Father, in all the duties, preachments, ceremonies, exercises etc. of the House
3. the absence of any lay school in England is a '*gravis necessitas*'.⁷⁷

Hope-Scott answered that Decree LXX technically spoke of corporations and therefore seemed to contemplate "external and independent Societies, and not a dependent School without separate organisation", thus it "hits Darnell's theory and leaves yours untouched". Furthermore he thought that the *gravis necessitas* of such a school as Newman's, and the absence of anybody else to undertake it, seemed to make a solid case and dispel any doubts on the question.⁷⁸ The Brief of Institution⁷⁹ specified the educated upper class as a special object of the Oratory's apostolate, but it had placed them in Birmingham "where the upper class does not exist". So, Newman argued, they were able to conform to the object the Holy See had given them, as best they could, by having "a school of gentlemen's sons".⁸⁰ Hope-Scott considered this an unsatisfactory argument for

of grave necessity.

76. Newman to Hope-Scott, 12 Jan 1862, *L&D* XX, p.123. In 1849 Newman had judged that they could proceed with the school plan for St Wilfrid's, because of the necessity involved in maintaining the property to which they were committed. "This would be an answer to an objection drawn from Decree 70 of our Rule — but for myself, I think the Decree does *not interfere at all* under *any* circumstances — since it has reference to *external* schools, not to one of *our own*. And this I perfectly recollect was my feeling when Palma altered it by the words '*sine gravi necessitate*'. " (Newman to Faber, 23 Nov 1849, *L&D* XIII, p.305)

77. Newman's comments beneath a copy of *Decretum LXX*, BOA

78. Hope-Scott to Newman, 13 Jan 1862, BOA

79. The extract from the Brief of Institution is as follows: *Laudamus plurimum Newmanii, ejusque sociorum propositum, ut dum sacri ministerii muneribus omnibus in Anglia fungentur, illud simul animo defixum praecipue habeant, et efficiendum curent, quod ad Religionem in amplioribus praesertim urbibus, atque inter splendidioris, doctioris, et honestioris ordinis hominum coetus, amplificandam perducere posse putaverint.*

Rough translation: We praise especially the proposal of Newman and his companions that, while they carry out all the tasks of the sacred ministry in England, they should bear in mind *especially* all the while, and care to perform, whatever they think leads to the growth of Religion, above all in the larger cities, and among bodies of *men of a more elevated, learned and illustrious class.*

80. Newman's comments beneath a copy of this extract, BOA

having a school. If the class to which they were sent did not exist in Birmingham, then there had been an *error loci*.⁸¹

Decree XCIV⁸² effectively disallowed changes to their constitution through *immutatio*, *derogatio* or *innovatio*. Newman asked whether the compatibility of Decree LXX and their "keeping school" amounted to one of these, or whether it was just a *declaratio* of what was not clear, or whether in fact a choice of one of two interpretations, both of which were admissible.⁸³ Hope-Scott did not answer: he thought Newman already had a good case.⁸⁴ Given the circumstances, Newman judged that the Oratory ought not to consult the Holy See.⁸⁵ He summarised their reasons for proceeding: their Brief sent them to the upper classes — "One special want of the upper class of Catholics just now is a lay school, there being no such thing, beyond our own, in England"; the care of boys was a "special object of St Philip"; and their Rule "not only admitted it, but had been altered in two instances from the Rule of the Chiesa Nuova in order to admit it".⁸⁶

81. Hope-Scott to Newman, 13 Jan 1862, BOA

82. *Decretum XCIV: Si quid ambiguum fuerit in nostris Constitutionibus, Praepositus, et Deputati declarabunt: nullo tamen modo possint eas immutare, derogare, aut aliqua ex parte innovare, vel novas condere.*

Rough translation: If there should be any ambiguity in our Constitutions the Superior (or Provost) and his Deputies shall interpret it: by no means however may they change, take away from, or innovate in any part thereof, or establish new ones.

83. Newman's comments beneath a copy of Decretum XCIV, BOA

84. Hope-Scott to Newman, 13 Jan 1862, BOA

85. There was one further document Newman thought relevant to their predicament, a memorandum written after going to Rome at Christmas 1855, containing points of experience for the Congregation in dealing with the ecclesiastical authorities in Rome. First, there was a "prima facie prejudice" against anyone going there and making work for them. Second, there was in Rome "a dislike of scrupulousness about duty in their subjects" and a dislike of any implied unfairness on their part. Third, Newman judged that they preferred their subjects to be at a distance, especially in mission countries, and to exercise "a large discretion", where possible, before resorting to them to resolve problems. He concluded that the Oratory ought never to act without good reasons; to be ready to produce them, to anticipate objections and answer them, but not to volunteer explanations. (Newman's memorandum, 14 Feb 1856, *L&D* XVII, p.151)

86. The two alterations were the insertion of the clause *in gravis necessitate* in Decree LXX and the omission of the Decree "against having boys in our rooms". (Newman's comments beneath a copy of the extract from the Brief of Institution, BOA) The latter was reinstated because of an accusation against one of the Fathers. In a special address to them, Newman recommended "1. Never to put your arm round a boy's neck or to show any familiarity towards boys. 2. To observe the rule of the Roman Oratory, which I got leave, not wisely, as I see now, to omit from our body of rules". The rule, translated into English by Murray, runs: "Let no one allow boys to enter his bedroom, unless they are conducted there by other persons, who remain as witnesses". (Murray, *op. cit.*, pp.376-7 & 433)

The public school lobby

Generally, reaction to the crisis was delayed as Newman had restricted its resolution to a small circle of friends. Moreover, it was characteristic of him that he was prepared to wait for the true facts to surface without undue activity on his part. By contrast, Darnell was in close contact with his friends, who, to varying degrees, stressed the public-school objective. Several reacted strongly to his departure and read into the changes a shift away from the public-school model.⁸⁷ The committee became aware of this lobby among the school supporters after reading Scott-Murray's letter to Bellasis. It provided them with a disturbing view of the school's development and could not but influence their thinking. Scott-Murray had been brooding over his last conversation with Newman, in October 1861, when he wrote it. Although the school had "gentlemanly boys" and provided good teaching, he was disappointed because it no longer seemed "to aim at the purpose for which it was founded, but to be quietly taking up the position of a large private school". He had thought that the "object was to creep on gradually into the Eton system", though he realised that Newman, "to avoid courting opposition, was proceeding leisurely, especially as the boys were still for the most part young".⁸⁸

Newman had replied somewhat loosely that a reorganised Oscott might take the older boys. Scott-Murray considered this prospect entailed

throwing over all the objects for which the school was founded. The objections to the old Catholic English system were not so much that the learning was deficient (for I believe that could not be said of Stonyhurst) but that it partook of the spying or Jesuit system, and allowed of none of the independence and freedom of individual character, which seems to be so admirably cultivated in the Protestant public schools. Many old Catholics thought such liberty and such a system incompatible with Catholic training, but others thought that Catholic Superiors and the use of the Catholic Sacraments were alone wanting to make the English system of the Protestant schools available to Catholics. It was understood that Dr Newman and the Birmingham Oratory were of that opinion, and I thought that a plan[,] for a short time entertained[,] of beginning the school at the Oratory had been given up, because it was foreseen, that if the new school flourished, it must be independent of the Oratory as a body, and even possibly in lay hands.

87. Simpson reported that J.M. Capes was furious and was threatening to cease publishing on account of the injustice. (Simpson to Acton, n.d. [Jan 1862], *Oratory School Magazine* CXIX, 1960/61, pp.34-5)

88. Scott-Murray to Bellasis, 22 Dec 1861, *L&D* XX, pp.97-8

The mere suggestion of an improved Oscott being an end to be wished for, seems to me a falling off from the idea of establishing a public school, for Oscott improved would be at best but a College, and we want or did want a public school; and I must add Fr Darnell always struck me as the man cut out for forming one.⁸⁹

Newman agreed with the letter in substance, but disowned the reference to "the spying or Jesuit system" which he considered to be "a *great* misconception" of his meaning. He attributed the apparent divergence of opinion between Scott-Murray and himself to his misleading comments at their last meeting. Scott-Murray's sentiments expressed the ideal which had all along inspired Newman and his convert friends; that a Catholic education and a public-school education were not incompatible. However, the letter betrayed a fundamental and unvoiced difference between Newman and the likes of Scott-Murray. Newman "dreaded lest it [the school] should become a mere Protestant School", whereas they showed no such signs.⁹⁰ It manifested itself in various ways. In describing the school as belonging to the private-school system,⁹¹ Scott-Murray evidently considered the link with the Oratory as detrimental to its ability to form boys in a spirit of freedom.

Mrs Scott-Murray wrote at length to Mrs Wootten in an attempt to persuade her to retire for a time, on the grounds of ill-health, so as to prevent the resignations. She praised Mrs Wootten for her crucial contribution to the foundation, but argued that a sudden change of masters could bring about its destruction, "to say nothing of the triumph it would give our enemies". She implored Mrs Wootten to put "the *public good*" above her private considerations, and offer her resignation.⁹² Both the Thynnes wrote to Mrs Wootten after Darnell's overnight stay with them, but neither hinted that she ought to make way by resigning. They were simply distressed to hear that such a promising combination should have come to nought. Darnell had "so completely won the confidence of the parents, as well as the love of the boys", that he was irreplaceable. Lady Thynne

89. *Ibid.*

90. Newman's memorandum, 16 Feb 1862, *L&D* XX, p.98. This memorandum shows that Jackson was inaccurate in asserting that there is no evidence to suggest that Newman was ever in sympathy with the educational philosophy of public schools. (J. Jackson, *op. cit.*, p.146)

91. Scott-Murray to Bellasis, 22 Dec 1861, *L&D* XX, p.97

92. Mrs Scott-Murray to Mrs Wootten, 5 Jan 1862, BOA

suggested that Darnell could have avoided the calamity by convincing Mrs Wootten how important it was that a headmaster should have supreme control and the support of all those under him. It is clear that the Thynnes had no notion of Newman's system of dual control, and that they took the conventional view that the powers of a public-school headmaster were all-embracing.⁹³

Thynne reacted sharply to the new list of staff, for it seemed to signal the abandonment of "what is called the Public School system of Education". He regretted the apparent return to the college system which seemed so unsuited to the English character, and he reminded Newman that the promoters had originally decided to adopt a different system. The English public-school system was the best to be found and suited their needs, "if certain things necessary to Catholics were super-added". He begged Newman to correct him if he had concluded wrongly.⁹⁴ The Scott-Murrays and the Thynnes received explanations from Newman and their sons remained at the school. In challenging the direction it was taking, under the perception that it was diverging from the original plan, they showed they had strongly identified with certain aspects of the scheme, while taking others for granted. Their correspondence with Newman and Mrs Wootten was conducted in a positive and open frame of mind, and allowed the matter to be resolved without bitterness.

Acton had lost touch with the school, though he saw Darnell and Oxenham regularly. Initially unaware of the nature of the dispute, he guessed it concerned the connection between the school and the Oratory. The new buildings and the establishment of a dormitory on the top floor of the Oratory implied that the school had become "a regular appendage, almost a part, of a religious house [...] and [...] at the same time the secular character of the establishment is diminished, and the Protestant public school element so far as it consists in dames' houses and the absence of surveillance necessarily loses ground". This would placate "those whom the Protestant associations offended", but meant that the school was fixed on its site and that its fortunes were tied to the Oratory. Acton wondered if these developments were connected to recent changes he thought he

93. Thynne to Mrs Wootten, n.d. [Jan 1862]] & Lady Thynne to Mrs Wootten, n.d. [Jan 1862], both BOA

94. Thynne to Newman, 18 Jan 1862, BOA

had detected in Newman's views on education.⁹⁵

Marshall and Oxenham argued that their behaviour was consistent with that expected of public-school masters, to counter the imputation that they had conspired against Newman, a charge all the masters vehemently denied. Marshall claimed that Mrs Wootten's interference had made it impossible to maintain school discipline. It had been tolerated for a long time and much had been done to prevent a crisis, especially by the tutors.⁹⁶ He had combined with the others because he had "considered the point at issue to be a matter so essential to the very existence of anything in the shape of a public school, that if the headmaster failed in carrying it, and was in consequence forced to resign, we had no course left but to do the same". There had been complete agreement among the masters as to the course of action.⁹⁷ Oxenham's explanation coincided with Marshall's. He agreed with Darnell that the presence of Mrs Wootten, while useful at the outset, had become "not only inconsistent with its professed claims as a public school", but such an obstacle as to make it impossible for him to continue as headmaster. He considered the crisis one of the most bitter disappointments of his life and the destruction of a "most cherished vision", but felt unable to retract anything he had said or done, a stance he maintained over the following months.⁹⁸

While Thynne shared the masters' view that the headmaster's supremacy should be unchallenged, he offered Newman an explanation for Mrs Wootten's recalcitrant behaviour. He believed she had become utterly convinced that Newman and Darnell "represented *two* different systems of education, and that Darnell was a fool in the hands of Mr Moody etc." She had felt it was her duty to counteract his influence and,

95. Acton to Simpson, 1 Jan 1862, Acton, *Correspondence of Lord Acton and Richard Simpson II*, pp.247–8. Acton probably based his observation on Newman's reply to Oxenham in the *Rambler* ('Seminaries of the Catholic Church', Sep 1860, pp.398–401) and an article in *Atlantis* he assumed Newman had written, both of which he found hard to reconcile with the Dublin lectures. The article in question ('Roman Education', *Atlantis* VII, 1862, pp.1–23) was probably one by Ornsby, not Newman. (*Correspondence of Lord Acton and Richard Simpson II*, p.248n)

96. Marshall to Flanagan, 2 Jan 1862, BOA

97. "As a question of school discipline, or of behaviour among gentlemen", he could not see how they could have done otherwise "than make the cause of our head-master entirely our own, and abide with him in the results". (Marshall to Newman, 6 Jan 1862, BOA)

98. Oxenham to Newman, 17 Jan 1862, BOA. Later he wished to renew his connections with Newman and the school, but without surrendering any of his principles. (Lockhart to Newman, 22 May 1862, BOA)

"constituting herself your shield, your eye and ear", she had justified herself in interfering with the discipline of the school in a way Darnell so much resented, and to which, Thynne agreed, "no one worthy of the name and position of Headmaster" could admit.⁹⁹

In offering her resignation, Miss French explained that her inability to view the issue in any way other than Darnell's disqualified her from pursuing her duties with the complete loyalty required.¹⁰⁰ Newman urged her to stay until Easter, as did Darnell, but she gracefully professed that nothing would persuade her to accept the decision Newman had made.¹⁰¹ Initially Darnell had argued that the presence of Mrs Wootten prevented the school from becoming a public school. Later correspondence suggested to Newman that his battle with Mrs Wootten was of secondary importance, and that the point at issue was "whether the school should be on an essentially private basis, or a public, as Eton and Winchester".¹⁰² After taking into account the school's Catholic dimension and its youthful status, it is evident that, using Richard Aldrich's description of private schools, it was Darnell's scheme, not Newman's, that was closer to the private school system.¹⁰³

Having spent a fortnight listening to Darnell and Oxenham, Acton concluded that Newman had become frightened at the prospect of large changes as the school approached public-school status, and had abandoned the whole idea of innovation: the three he had fallen out with — Darnell, Moody and Oxenham — were precisely those who championed the public-school system. Unsuccessful in dissuading Darnell from requesting temporary leave from the Oratory, Acton managed to restrain the other two from revenge, or making premature public protest or opposition. (In doing so Acton reckoned he was rendering Newman an even greater service than in 1858–59.) He urged them to write a short matter-of-fact letter to the parents they knew best. Darnell's draft circular blamed his resignation

99. Thynne to Newman, 18 Jan 1862, BOA

100. Miss French to Newman, 28 Dec 1861, BOA

101. Miss French to Newman, 29 Dec 1861, BOA

102. Newman to Bellasis, 23 Mar 1862, *L&D* XX, p.176

103. Aldrich explains that private schools were run by individuals for profit. Their selling points were a greater flexibility in curricular and entry requirements, being unrestricted by custom or statutes, and a more closely supervised regime. While they often leased or rented premises and depended upon the "good health, will power, financial acumen, organizational ability and teaching prowess" of a single individual, endowed schools were generally better placed, with the apparatus of endowment and a governing body. (R. Aldrich, *School and society in Victorian Britain*, Epping, 1995, pp.38–9)

on Newman's refusal to carry out the public-school system, to which he had originally committed himself, but it was not sent.¹⁰⁴ Acton reckoned that his cherished dream, a Catholic university in England, was "trembling in the balance" and "all the future of [Catholic] education at stake". The only hope for the school was to secure Darnell's reinstatement, and this depended on many factors, such as Arnold's resignation.¹⁰⁵ Although Acton warned Darnell of the dangers of "an opposition scheme", news that the correspondence between Newman and Darnell was being circulated led him to concede that he could now put forward a defence.¹⁰⁶ Even in March 1862 Acton, Simpson and Wetherell¹⁰⁷ entertained hopes for Darnell's reinstatement in Newman's proposed upper school, moved to a country location, but by then the school was in better shape.¹⁰⁸ Meanwhile Darnell had been taken on as a private tutor.¹⁰⁹

The reaction of parents and friends

Acton considered the school's success vital for reforming the system of Catholic education and was willing, if necessary, to reinvolve himself to save it. He thought Darnell had been

104. He took Flanagan's advice, that it would be a mistake to do so as the 'public-school question' was not understood, against Moody's, that this was the key to their position. (Moody's diary, 30 Jan & 2 Feb 1862, BOA)

105. Acton to Simpson, 13 Jan 1862, Acton, *Correspondence of Lord Acton and Richard Simpson II*, p.254; Acton to Döllinger, 28 Jan 1862, Döllinger, *op. cit.* II, p.247

106. Acton to Simpson, 6 Mar 1862 (first letter), Acton, *Correspondence of Lord Acton and Richard Simpson II*, p.270. Oxenham sent Moody his own circular to counteract the circulation of the correspondence by Bellasis and Hope-Scott. In it he defended himself against three charges: having entered the school under false pretences in order to force the public-school system upon it; conspiring against Newman; and attempting to remove the school from Edgbaston. He referred to the Congregation decree allowing Darnell to establish a public school on the model of Eton and Winchester. Flanagan was also shown the draft circular and approved of it. (Moody's diary, 20 Mar 1862, BOA)

107. Thomas Frederick Wetherell (1830–1908) was educated at Brasenose College, Oxford. When he became a Catholic in 1855 he was cut off from some of his inheritance. He worked as a clerk in the War Office and briefly as editor of the *Weekly Review*, before becoming sub-editor of the *Rambler* in 1859 at Newman's instigation. He was later sub-editor of the *Home and Foreign Review*, then edited for Acton the *Chronicle* and the *North British Review*. Acton obtained for him the post of private secretary to Earl Granville at the Foreign Office.

108. Oxenham, meanwhile, was "trying every means" to encourage Darnell to leave the Oratory and, "as soon as Newman's country school is opened, to set up an opposition shop". (Acton to Simpson, 6 & 21 Mar 1862; Simpson to Acton, 5 Mar 1862, Acton, *Correspondence of Lord Acton and Richard Simpson II*, pp.268, 270 & 274) Rumours of a school at Rednal led Moody to hope for "a *bone fide* public school, say at Winchester". (Moody's diary, 21 Feb 1862, BOA)

109. He was engaged to tutor the eldest son of Prince Doria and his wife Lady Mary Talbot, daughter of the 16th Earl of Shrewsbury.

treated roughly, having carried out all the work and having exercised all the day-to-day authority, while Newman had "reduced himself to a nonentity in the school". He wondered if Hope-Scott and Bellasis recognised this, though it was plain to all the boys and masters. He thought Newman ought to recover "his own direct influence in the school not by Mrs W[ootten] but by actually taking part in it, seeing the masters, examining the boys occasionally, and giving them occasional sermons. I hope somebody will tell him so."¹¹⁰ Bellasis and Hope-Scott had already done just this.

While the Congregation were resolving the dispute, Scott-Murray had declined to discuss matters any further with Bellasis. He explained that, like others, he had presented his views at the promoters' meetings in the hope that he would find supporters to carry them out. Now the Oratory had to make up its mind, and it was "for the parents individually to decide whether they think the new arrangements likely or not to suit their views for their children".¹¹¹ To judge by this criterion, it would seem that the vote of confidence in Newman and his school was unanimous. As the dust settled, Newman noted the outcome: "the more things are inquired into, the more the clear truth comes out, favourable to us".¹¹²

Bittleston was the first to reassure Newman that he had been bound to act as he had: out of justice to Mrs Wootten; "by your obligations to the parents of the boys, and the friends and founders of the School"; and by his duty to the Congregation.¹¹³ Insofar as there was written evidence of the dispute, it was contained in the documents that Newman had assembled and passed on to Bellasis and Hope-Scott. They acknowledged that the contents were in complete agreement with all Newman had told them, and confidence radiated out from them. Newman left perusal of the documents to their judgement. They were not circulated, neither were they used in Newman's defence, on the grounds that he needed no defence. They were only shown to those who were

110. Acton to Simpson, 1 & 5 Jan 1862, Acton, *Correspondence of Lord Acton and Richard Simpson II*, pp.248 & 250. The suggestion that Newman did not examine was inaccurate. Newman overcame Darnell's initial reluctance and examined all boys over a two-day period three times a year, and on other occasions. (Moody's diary, 2 & 23 Nov, 20–21 Dec 1859; 3 May, 17–18 Dec 1860, BOA)

111. Scott-Murray to Bellasis, n.d. [Dec 1861], BOA

112. Newman to St John, 16 Jan 1862, *L&D XX*, p.129

113. Bittleston to Newman, 2 Jan 1862, *L&D XX*, p.103n

convinced that Darnell had been treated harshly, and to reveal that he had assumed too much independence from the Oratory.¹¹⁴ When Acton complained at being excluded, only five others had seen them.¹¹⁵

The letters Newman received supplied a vote of confidence in Mrs Wootten. Gaisford expressed his "entire approval" of the measures Newman had taken. He had bargained for two things at the school: that it would be under the control of Newman; and that a lady like Mrs Wootten would provide feminine care. He reasoned that the boys were of "a more tender age" than those sent to Eton and Rugby, and that, however much he wished for the school to "take a Public School tone", the young boys needed "a woman's superintendence".¹¹⁶ Hibbert rejoiced at "*the change* in the management". The return of one son was delayed because of ring worm which had not been dealt with immediately, the previous term, a direct consequence of Darnell's prohibition on boys seeing Mrs Wootten.¹¹⁷ Gaisford and Hibbert had told Bellasis that the names of Newman and Mrs Wootten were essential for the school: without them they would not have sent their children.¹¹⁸

Fitzgerald asked if his two sons could be returned to Mrs Wootten's house, as he had "unlimited confidence in her care and management of boys".¹¹⁹ The Hornyolds praised Mrs Wootten, as well as Newman's decision to support her. Mrs Hornyold claimed that nothing could exceed Mrs Wootten's kindness to her son.¹²⁰ This parental

114. Newman explained that "our private letters have been necessarily exposed, in justice to the school". (Newman to H. Wilberforce, 26 Jan 1862, *L&D* XX, p.139)

115. These were Monsell, Macmullen, Patterson, F.R. Ward and Weguelin, only the latter two being parents of boys at the school. (Acton to Bellasis, 20, 21 & 22 Mar 1862; Bellasis to Acton, 21 & 22 Mar 1862, all BOA)

James Laird Patterson (1822–1902) was a convert London priest and an aide to Wiseman.

116. Gaisford to Newman, 11 Jan 1862, BOA

117. Hibbert to Newman, 11 Jan 1862, BOA. Newman used this evidence to win over Thynne. (Newman to Thynne, 26 Jan 1862, *L&D* XX, p.136)

118. Bellasis to Newman, 9 Jan 1862, BOA

119. They had been originally placed under her care and were content until told by other boys that Miss French "gave a more bountiful supply of jam every evening". He had yielded to their whim and allowed them to be transferred to Miss French's house. (Fitzgerald to Newman, 20 Jan 1862, BOA)

120. Bellasis to Newman, 1 Jan 1862, BOA

feedback assured Newman that if Mrs Wootten had gone, "there was a chance of half the school going — for her care of the young boys and popularity with the mothers have been the making of the school — as I know full well, if I did not know it before, by what the mothers have said to me since the row".¹²¹ No one was better placed than Bellasis to assess her worth and he considered her "one of the chief inducements to the great majority of parents".¹²² Newman had pursued a course of action on behalf of the parents and friends of the school. It had brought matters to a head. He had relied on them for backing, and received it in good measure. "My greatest support, after that of a clear conscience, is the verdict of my friends in this matter — and they go one way."¹²³

Conclusion

The tragedy of the crisis was that it occurred in a climate of goodwill. Everyone involved was conscious that they were participating in an exciting new development for Catholic education. All were working towards the same goal, a Catholic public school, though there was no developed consensus on how it was to be achieved. The promoters had decided to entrust the execution of the project to Newman, but, due to their public-school upbringing, several converts among them exhibited a naivety in pushing for a superficial solution to the problem of forming a Catholic school: effectively a public school with Catholic elements bolted on.¹²⁴ Newman desired a more authentic blend to enable the Catholic element to be present in a vital way. It was inevitable that this would entail the sacrifice of certain public-school characteristics.

Newman's scheme — Darnell, as headmaster, under Newman, as President — never looked like working. Darnell acted and thought like a conventional headmaster, invested with full authority. Besides, as Trevor notes, he transferred his loyalty and

121. Newman to Ornsby, 31 Jan 1861, *L&D* XX, p.143

122. Bellasis to Darnell, 17 Dec 1861, BOA

123. Newman to Pollen, 12 Jan 1862, *L&D* XX, p.118

124. Thynne envisaged a public school with Catholic elements "super-added", while Scott-Murray thought that all that seemed necessary was the addition of "Catholic Superiors and the use of the Catholic Sacraments". (Thynne to Newman, 18 Jan 1862, BOA & Scott-Murray to Bellasis, 22 Dec 1861, *L&D* XX, p.98)

interest from the Oratory to the school.¹²⁵ Newman was at fault in not exercising his role in the crucial early stages. When it was evident that the school was developing along lines markedly different from those he had intended, his attempt to involve himself, having so fully surrendered control, must have seemed like interference, and his defence of Mrs Wootten a preference for her over Darnell and the masters. Ker asserts that the alienation between Darnell and Mrs Wootten was due to her knowledge and opposition to his plan to move the school away from Edgbaston.¹²⁶ The evidence suggests a more general opposition, that she opposed Darnell to the extent that his policy deviated from Newman's. The denial of the resigning staff and Scott-Murray to the charge of attempting to remove the school from Newman's control was strong enough to suggest there was no such deliberate act. Nevertheless, there had been a growing conviction, if not a working assumption, that the school was Darnell's and that it would soon move into the country.

The pursuit of conflicting plans for the school's development indicated that there was a fundamental lack of communication and a failure, on Newman's part, to transmit the aims of the undertaking to the staff and enthusiastic parents. There was no mechanism by which the views of loyal friends, such as Scott-Murray, could be incorporated into future plans. The communication gap with staff was borne out particularly by the masters' defence of their act of resignation which showed that they were conventional public-school masters, and, by implication, that they had not been led to think otherwise. Why were Bellasis and Hope-Scott privy to Newman's plans for the school, unlike Darnell and the masters? Besides the practical difficulty Newman had in working with Darnell, it was surely because Bellasis and Hope-Scott represented the parents whose initiative the school was. However, their roles needed clarification as the school was gradually assuming a public character.¹²⁷

The problem of the school's unsuitable location had no obvious remedy, yet, like

125. Trevor, *Light in winter*, p.230

126. Ker, *Newman: a biography*, p.507

127. Darnell referred to Bellasis's "mischievous interference" and Hope-Scott's "evil part" in resolving the crisis. (Darnell to Newman, Aug 1862, BOA) Acton called them Newman's "liegemen" (Acton to Simpson, 1 Jan 1862, Acton, *Correspondence of Lord Acton and Richard Simpson II*, p.248) By contrast Mrs Fitzherbert told Bellasis she had every confidence in him solving the dispute. "The matter cannot be in better hands than yours". (Mrs Fitzherbert to Bellasis, 23 Dec 1861, BOA)

others, could have been eased by better communication.¹²⁸ It was associated with the dilemma of whether to cater for older boys, and, if so, how? It had been anticipated at the outset but had come to the fore sooner than expected, as the school had not begun only with eight- and nine-year-olds but a range of ages. It was exacerbated by the addition of older boys from other schools. These and other problems were ultimately Newman's responsibility. Yet, he found himself in a dilemma. How could parents or others be permitted to dictate terms while the Oratory was 'on trial' and supplying most of the finance, thereby shouldering the financial burden that, in justice, belonged to the parental body. So keenly did he feel it, that his immediate reaction to the plan to form a separate upper school was to warn Bellasis: "you parents must turn your thoughts to the creation somewhere of a higher school — for at present it seems as if we could do nothing more than take boys under 13".¹²⁹

The connection with the Oratory was of crucial importance to the school's identity, yet even the Oratorians were confused about it. The matter had been discussed but not fully clarified at the outset. A fundamental difference of opinion had arisen. Scott-Murray, like a number of others, wanted a school in a rural setting under Newman's supervision. The connection with the Oratory was more or less tolerated as it provided "security for the religious element", but, in Scott-Murray's opinion, the link was not "intended to apply to the *spiritual* supervision in any way".¹³⁰ He feared that the school would forfeit its public-school credentials and effectively become another Catholic college if it attached itself to a religious body. The intertwining of school and Oratory buildings served to fuel these fears. Acton was uncertain whether the object was to increase Newman's involvement with the school or to strengthen it with the Oratory's support. He thought the latter a mistake, as the school would stand, after Newman's death, "by virtue of Darnell and his staff, not of the Oratory".¹³¹

128. The conflict of interests experienced in deciding whether or not to move from an urban setting was one that afflicted the four great public schools situated in London. (Clarendon Report I, pp.50-2)

129. Newman to Bellasis, 27 Dec 1861, *L&D* XX, p.89

130. Scott-Murray to Bellasis, n.d. [Dec 1861], BOA

131. Acton to Simpson, 1 Jan 1862, Acton, *Correspondence of Lord Acton and Richard Simpson* II, p.248. According to Jackson, Acton was the leader of a group who wanted the school to be independent, not only of the Oratory, but of Newman as well. (J. Jackson, *op. cit.*, p.130)

Newman heeded Hope-Scott's clear advice concerning the relationship with the Oratory. He abandoned his former position — the school viewed as the undertaking of two Oratorians — and opted for closer identification with the Oratory. Thus Barnes is correct in observing that the school reverted to a conventional formula after the crisis. It does not follow that Acton was correct in judging that Newman's views on education had changed. Newman's decision was eminently plausible as an emergency measure intended to provide a guarantee for what the converts tended to take for granted — religious security.

It was Newman's view on the Oratory having a school that changed: it did so according to circumstances. His early thinking derived from a study of the Oratorian Congregation. He had read that youths were educated at the *Chiesa Nuova* and that some had joined the Congregation. As many as 50 attended, but most lived at home.¹³² When first discussing schemes for St Wilfrid's, he ruled out schemes for lay boys.¹³³ The Oratory was already taking boys who showed signs of becoming Oratorians and Newman was prepared to relax the criteria, but not so far as to include those "who are *certainly not* going to be ecclesiastics".¹³⁴ He turned down the chance to educate the son of Lady Fullerton¹³⁵ on the grounds it was not an Oratorian task: they did not intend to set themselves up against the Jesuits.¹³⁶ When Newman came round to the idea of a school at St Wilfrid's, he gave two reasons: the necessity of maintaining St Wilfrid's, and the likely supply of vocations.¹³⁷ The good of the Oratory was uppermost in Newman's mind when contemplating these educational plans. A school for small boys, a seminary, or a novitiate would be useful in supplying or training novices, but a college for youths would barely be so. Moreover, a college entailed "a work which is simply not Oratorian". When it became clear that only the college plan was feasible, Newman insisted that it

132. Addington, *op. cit.*, pp.44–5 & 128

133. "If it is not *our* school, lay could be taken, not if it is ours." (Newman to Faber, 2 Apr 1849, *L&D* XIII, p.100)

134. Newman to Ryder, 13 Mar 1849, *L&D* XIII, p.185

135. Lady Fullerton (1812–85) was the daughter of 1st Earl of Granville and Lady Cavendish. Her husband became a Catholic in 1843 and she followed three years later. Among her novels were *Ellen Middleton* (1844), *Grantley Manor* (1847) and *Too strange to be true* (1864). After her only son died in 1855, she devoted herself to works of charity.

136. Newman to Faber, 20 Jun 1849, *L&D* XIII, p.181

137. Newman to Faber, 23 Nov 1849, *L&D* XIII, p.305

should be temporary; that they should look to dispose of it soon, along with St Wilfrid's.¹³⁸ A decade later, in 1858, Newman committed himself to a project he again thought would only require temporary assistance. After the crisis, Newman's original assurance to the promoters that only two Fathers were to be involved, not the whole Oratory, was altered. The "quotidiana sollicitudo of the School"¹³⁹ meant that it and the Oratory were becoming increasingly bound together. This closer union compromised the school's secular character, yet it also compromised the Oratory's identity.¹⁴⁰ It could be argued that the grave necessity of Catholic educational provision demanded this mutual sacrifice.¹⁴¹

The changing relation of the school with the Oratory is seen clearly from the financial viewpoint. The school was initially sanctioned by the Congregation as a personal work of two Fathers — a private undertaking of Newman, with Darnell as his "representative" and collaborator — in which Newman's friends were to supply the funding: "The Congregation was not to pay a farthing towards it." Alterations to the church, for the school's sake, were supposed to be financed from a loan raised by the school promoters, and the interest paid from fee income. Instead, individual Fathers provided loans. The same happened with later church enlargements, the conversion of the top storey of the Oratory House for dormitories, and the erection of new school buildings. In February 1861 the liabilities for the school were transferred from Darnell to the Congregation. The logic of these changes was completed just after the crisis: on 20th February 1862 the Congregation formally made the school "absolutely ours". "The whole

138. Newman told Faber: "My feeling is this, a child's school or a seminary *suberves* the Oratory, but a College is taking away Fathers for distinct work, which will seldom *tell* as regards the Congregation." (Newman to Faber, 29 Dec 1849 & 3 Jan 1850; Newman to Stanton, 30 Dec 1849; Newman to Hutchinson, 6 Jan 1850; *L&D* XIII, pp.349–51, 353, 360 & 367)

139. Newman to Hope-Scott, 8 Mar 1863, *L&D* XX, p.419

140. Flanagan left the Oratory in 1865 and blamed the effect the school had on the Oratory. (Newman to St John, 13 Aug 1862, *L&D* XX, p.259)

141. Jackson puts the following, very different interpretation on events. Newman intervened in the crisis on behalf of the Oratory as is superior. The Rule and Decrees prove that the Oratory was always the executive body and that the Fathers teaching in it did so as Oratorians, not as individuals. It was misleading for Newman to pretend that the school was not Oratorian, and it was equally misleading to pretend that the Fathers would not interfere with its running. Newman did nothing to enlighten parents that he wanted to found an Oratorian school, not a public school. (J. Jackson, *op. cit.*, pp.131–9)

management and control of the finances" now belonged to them.¹⁴²

Newman admitted it had become impossible to separate the school financially from the Oratory. For various reasons, it had effectively become the property of the Congregation: because large sums had been spent on it that the school could never repay; because it was now placed on land belonging to the Congregation; because the school had appropriated a considerable part of the Oratory House; "and because, if it does not belong to the Congregation, to whom does it belong?" For internal accounting purposes Newman continued viewing it as an independent enterprise.¹⁴³

In assessing the damage the crisis caused the school, it is necessary to go beyond the immediate facts — the return of all the boys and the replacement of the resigning staff. For parents who wanted a public-school education there were no other options available, so it was not surprising that Scott-Murray and Thynne continued to send their sons.¹⁴⁴ On the other hand, for parents who laid greater emphasis on Catholic instruction and training the alternative was to withdraw their sons for one of the colleges. When the 16-year-old boy, Wolseley, was withdrawn for a private tutor, Newman anticipated an exodus of old Catholics — "The old Catholics hold together like currants; one go, all go" — and losses of up to 20.¹⁴⁵ By October 1862 Newman reckoned the school had lost ten boys, mainly because of families deciding not to send sons.¹⁴⁶ Nevertheless, despite a

142. Newman's memorandum: relation of the School to the Oratory, 7 Feb 1865, (BOA, A.26.5). In Murray's *Newman the Oratorian* (pp.462–6), the important decrees of the Congregation are summarised. The commentary for the decree of 18 Feb 1861 reads: "The School formally undertaken by the Oratory."

143. Newman's memorandum: about the relation of the School to the Oratory, 19 Dec 1864, BOA & Newman's draft of a Congregation Decree, n.d., BOA, A.26.5

144. Another factor was Scott-Murray's indebtedness to Bellasis and Hope-Scott who had successfully supported his appointment, when High Sheriff, of Morris as his chaplain. Hope-Scott wrote two letters to *The Times* which swung public opinion, while Bellasis acted as an adviser during the affair. (J.H. Pollen, *The life and letters of Father John Morris, of the Society of Jesus, 1826–1893*, London, 1896, pp.128–32 & Bellasis, *Memorials of Serjeant Bellasis*, pp.13–14)

145. Newman to Neville, 30 Sep 1862, *L&D XX*, p.282. Wolseley's father was a convert and his mother an old Catholic.

146. Bishop J.Brown referred to one old Catholic being withdrawn due to poor religious instruction. (Brown to Bellasis, 5 Nov 1862, BOA) No other withdrawals are referred to in Newman's *Letters and diaries*. However, Sir J. Gerard's son and Lady Dormer's nephew were sent elsewhere. (Newman to Bellasis, 19 Oct 1862 & Newman to St John, 25 Oct 1862, *L&D XX*, pp.314 & 327–8) Monteith named the Blundells and Crosbys as two old Catholic families who now decided not to sent their sons. (Monteith to Bellasis, 18 Mar 1862, BOA) Two Blundells went to Downside in 1862 and a year later a younger Mostyn. (Downside School, *List of boys at St Gregory's*) Monteith himself was undecided at the time, but later that year opted

small decrease in admissions, school numbers remained buoyant after the crisis.¹⁴⁷ By Easter 1862 Newman was convinced that while Darnell's departure had been a blow for the Oratory, it had not been one for the school.¹⁴⁸ It had benefited the school immeasurably.¹⁴⁹ A measure of the anguish the crisis caused him was his admission afterwards that he had never in his life had a "severer" trial, although "never did things begin so soon to mend".¹⁵⁰

To some extent the crisis was inspired by liberal Catholic influence. When Darnell engaged Oxenham in 1861, Acton and Simpson began conspiring how they might influence Darnell to take on Wetherell, the third proprietor of the *Rambler*. After Darnell's resignation, Simpson suggested that Döllinger could be asked to mediate in the dispute. From Simpson's viewpoint, Newman's position was only plausible on two counts: his ignorance of educational structures, "not having been a public school man", or "that painful subserviency" to authority Newman regularly showed in yielding "his own convictions to the supposed desire of Bishops or Pope".¹⁵¹

The crisis, and its solution, revolved around a tension: the resolution of apparently opposing aims in establishing a school that was both Catholic and imitative of the best Protestant schools. The attitude of the resigning staff revealed that they had failed to appreciate the delicate balance fashioned by Newman in his solution to the problem. Being converts, the masters were prone to the tendency to pursue the goal of a public school at all costs. To counterbalance this bias, Newman felt obliged to introduce a safeguard: a closer connection between school and Oratory. The public-school lobby found it hard to appreciate what seemed like an unnecessary concession, whereas, to the majority of old Catholics, Newman's compromise seemed eminently sensible.

for the Oratory School.

147. For entry numbers see Appendix II. It seems that Acton was surprised that the school had any new boys at all. (Newman to Bellasis, 19 Oct 1862, *L&D* XX, p.314)

148. Newman to Pollen, 21 Jan 1862 & Newman to Bellasis, 23 Mar 1862, *L&D* XX, pp.131 & 176

149. Newman to Miss du Boulay, 2 May 1862 & Newman to Miss Holmes, 25 May 1862, *L&D* XX, pp.194 & 200

150. Newman to H. Wilberforce, 26 Jan 1862, *L&D* XX, p.138

151. Acton to Simpson, 7 Jul 1861; Simpson to Acton, 31 Dec 1861 & 4 Jan 1862, Acton, *Correspondence of Lord Acton and Richard Simpson* II, pp.152, 246 & 249

CHAPTER VI A FRESH START

Newman had surrendered the initiative for forming the infant establishment at Christmas 1858, and did not regain it until Christmas 1861. The energy with which he undertook its reorganisation and formation thereafter was all the greater on account of the troubles. At the beginning many of the arrangements had been, out of necessity, vague or provisional. The crisis provided Newman with an opportunity for reviewing practice and clarifying, modifying or changing arrangements. The process was facilitated by parents and friends who enabled him to assess the first two-and-a-half years.

Extensive changes took place.¹ What were they and what caused them? Were they intended to rectify the school's divergence, under Darnell, from the original plan, or was the original plan modified? Were the changes deliberate or forced by circumstances? Answers to these questions (which were begun in the previous chapter) help to identify the characteristics of the foundation and hence Newman's idea of a school. His idealised scheme for a university had been expounded in his Dublin lectures and had been intended to act as a stimulus for the foundation of the Catholic University, but there was no equivalent for the school foundation. Nevertheless the *Idea of a university* sheds light on Newman's idea of a school by implication, in so far as school education is the preamble to university education. So too does the *Rise and progress of universities* in its chapters on disciplinary and pastoral matters.² To grasp his idea of a school more fully, it is necessary to examine school practice after 1862. Although most of the day-to-day correspondence between Newman and parents does not survive,³ the *Letters and diaries* provide abundant material for assembling a picture of Newman's idea of an academic school that would prepare for university and the professions. Useful archival material includes St John's diary of 1862, a schoolboy's diary of 1864–65 and 1867–70, a school timetable, prospectuses, staff lists, prize lists, the accounts ledger for 1861–78, financial

1. The reaction of one parent to the new list of staff he had been sent, was to conclude that the changes amounted to sending his son to a new school. (Sheil to Newman, 20 Jan 1862, BOA)

2. The *Rise and progress of universities* forms the first part of *Historical sketches* III (pp.1–251). The two pertinent chapters are 'Discipline and influence' and 'Professors and tutors'. (*Ibid.*, pp.60–76 & 179–91)

3. Of the half-yearly letters Newman sent to all parents, only a handful are extant. Few letters from parents to Newman have survived, as he destroyed them. (Newman to St John, 16 Sep 1863, *L&D* XX, p.523)

summaries, a list of donations, and a lists of boys' destinations after school.⁴

New regime

When the Oratory School reopened its internal affairs were handled jointly by Newman and St John. Together they undertook the crucial task of *forming* it. While St John concentrated on the day-to-day running, Newman worked with Bellasis on matters external to its daily life, such as engaging new staff. Although Bellasis's input was vital, it was short-lived, and after the summer of 1862 he was seldom called upon for his services. Hope-Scott remained at hand to provide advice, which he did for many years after the crisis. The partnership of Newman and St John lasted until 1872, when St John retired. Newman hoped St John would take over his presiding role, but the changeover did not take place.⁵ St John died in 1875 and Mrs Wootten a year later; Bellasis and Hope-Scott died in 1873. These events suggest 1872 as marking the end of the school's foundational period.

Unlike Darnell, St John⁶ was not a natural schoolmaster but his friendship and mutual sympathy with Newman meant that Newman could rely on St John to bring his idea of the school into reality.⁷ They both found "everything in the greatest confusion". The sudden departures meant that they "had the least possible assistance from the past to

4. All BOA

5. Tristram, 'The Oratory School', Jan 1934, p.187. Newman wrote to St John, "I rejoice to tell you that the load of anxiety which I have shared with you so long, is, I trust, taken off our backs; I trust so." (30 Aug 1872, *L&D* XXVI, p.156)

6. Ambrose St John (1815–75) was the great grand-son of John, 10th Lord of St John Bletsoe. He was educated at Westminster School and became a Student at Christ Church, Oxford.

7. Newman dated their friendship from 1843, the year St John left his curacy under H. Wilberforce to join Newman at Littlemore. He became a Catholic a few days before Newman. The two were sent off to Rome to study, and returned as Oratorians with the mission of setting up an Oratory in England. The bond of friendship that developed between them was so strong that Newman declared: "As far as this world was concerned, I was his first and last". They had contrasting personalities and interests. St John was fair-haired, blue-eyed, large of frame and bustling in movement. Some 15 years younger than Newman, he was genial and vivacious. While Newman's interests lay in philosophy and patristics, St John specialised in biblical studies and semitic languages. St John also had a good command of French, Italian, Spanish and German. Newman described how in typical fashion St John acceded to his wish: "When we suddenly wanted a Headmaster to our School, he, without a word, giving up his intended work on the Psalms, undertook the office". (Tristram, 'The Oratory School', Nov 1932, pp.191–2) St John acted as headmaster for a decade though he was barely involved with the School before the crisis.

enlighten the present — so we had to learn to do every thing".⁸ Newman did not lay all the blame on the "late regime, for the School has been all along in a state of commencement".⁹ Being a new institution, there was no established pattern and this meant that everything had to be overseen. However, the lack of continuity presented them with the chance to apply a new broom and give the school a fresh start. First Bellasis, then St John visited Oscott to learn about arrangements there.¹⁰ The duties of Prefects, tutors and masters at the Oratory School were clarified and then promulgated.¹¹ Older boys had their privileges specified.¹² A new timetable was drawn up and the school rules were clarified.¹³

To judge from St John's diary, his two major preoccupations were discipline and academic standards. Many petty incidents of indiscipline and insubordination are recorded. St John introduced the Westminster practice of "bricking on the hands" for some offences,¹⁴ while flogging was reserved for serious ones, and parents informed on these occasions.¹⁵ In March 1862 two boys were caught pistol-shooting and obtaining ammunition at school through trickery. One was stripped of his prefectship, while the main culprit was offered the choice of expulsion or flogging. He chose the latter, which he received in the presence of the senior boys.¹⁶ Greater strictness was balanced by the

8. Newman to J.B. Morris, 26 Feb 1862, *L&D* XX, p.157

9. Newman to Bellasis, 5 Feb 1862, *L&D* XX, p.148

10. The main points St John noted were the punishment system, the exam system, the boys' library, the dormitory system, and the division of the playground and study between older and younger boys. St John later sent Marshall, Rougemont and the Prefects on a visit to Oscott. (St John's diary, 6 Feb & 4 Mar 1862, BOA) Moody recorded that St John went to see Oscott "in a *practical* way". (Moody's diary, 7 Feb 1862, BOA) These visits were probably the result of Bellasis's earlier visit there. (Newman to St John, 16 Jan 1862, *L&D* XX, p.129)

11. These duties were the subject of discussion at several meetings of masters. A major change was that the Prefects replaced the tutors in supervising dormitory discipline. Eventually, "The rules for Tutors were given to them by the Father [Newman]." (St John's diary, 8 Feb, 1 & 15 Mar 1862, BOA)

12. These included: "1. Later hours. 2. More liberty about bounds. 3. Care of little boys." (St John's diary, 3 Feb 1862, BOA)

13. St John's diary, 1, 22 & 28 Feb; 1 Mar 1862, BOA

14. St John's diary, 7 May 1862, BOA

15. St John's diary, 11 Mar 1862, BOA

16. St John's diary, 20, 22 & 26 Mar 1862, BOA

granting of half-holidays to mark special days.¹⁷

In throwing himself into the task of shaping the school, Newman brought on himself an immense amount of work, which left little time for literary pursuits. By April 1862 he was so "overcome with work and anxiety" that he was confined to his room and, for the first time in his life, received Communion for the sick.¹⁸ The crisis had forced him to exercise much more than a presiding role, and this was further compounded by his own exacting vision of how a school ought to be. His involvement diminished as the pattern of school life became established, but only did so gradually, because as one problem receded others emerged. Continued uncertainties and dangers meant that numbers rarely rose above 75 in Newman's lifetime.

In vacations Newman was often left with school business while St John was away visiting parents, recruiting, or else resting.¹⁹ School work left St John worn out and brought on his asthma: on these occasions Newman had to replace him.²⁰ After a life full of high-profile work and rewarding activity, it was not easy for Newman to adapt and resign himself to the relatively humble and monotonous task of overseeing a small school, yet he entered fully into the spirit of schoolmastering.²¹ Newman's energetic oversight manifested itself in all school business. Even in relatively minor matters he showed he was prepared to act decisively. On discovering that a lottery had been organised by the boys, Newman alerted St John to the fact. A day later, after mulling over the matter, he sent St John a blunt note asking him to find out who had organised it: "Nothing ought to be done in the School without our knowing it. Our permission ought to have been asked. [...]"

17. One such was St Patrick's day. St John recorded: "Evening gave punch. made the boys very disorderly — threw ink about — The boy who did so showed himself up." (St John's diary, 17 Mar 1862, BOA)

18. Newman to Bellasis, 17 Apr 1862, *L&D* XX, p.188

19. Newman to Miss Giberne, 22 Jul 1862 & Newman to St John, 5 Jan 1863, *L&D* XX, pp.237–8 & 385

20. Newman to Miss Giberne, 29 Sep 1863, *L&D* XX, p.531

21. One reply he gave to friends, who wondered why he now wrote so little, shows this. He considered himself "very fortunate in our boys — and, if I could believe it to be God's will, would turn away my thoughts from ever writing any thing, and should see, in the superintendence of these boys, the nearest return to my Oxford life — for, to my surprise, I find that Oxford 'men' and schoolboys are but varieties of one species, and I think I should get on with the one as I got on with the other". (Newman to Miss Bowles, 13 Feb 1864, *L&D* XXI p.51)

I should not have allowed it [...] I trust so great a misapprehension will not occur again."²²

Staff

In the first half of 1862 Newman and Bellasis worked closely on staff matters. Bellasis's unflagging efforts on behalf of the school were made despite heavy professional commitments and illness. Although neither was experienced in the business of forming and running a school, they were both ready to roll up their sleeves and set to work. Together they exercised an 'induction process' for both new and returning staff: they were welcomed on arrival; school arrangements were discussed with them; their cooperation was asked for; their suggestions were welcomed.²³

Bellasis's role as school agent is illustrated by his meeting with Pope in which he explained the origin of the crisis: that it had occurred because of the independent views of the headmaster which Newman could not tolerate, sparked off by a dispute over Mrs Wootten's position as dame. He explained what the parents had asked for regarding Mrs Wootten and the connection with the Oratory. Bellasis impressed upon Pope the "importance and difficulty" of Newman's undertaking and the need for all engaged to "throw themselves heartily" into Newman's view of the school.²⁴ Bellasis listened carefully to what Pope had to say about his former school at Gibraltar. There the Bishop acted as Provost and exercised a "constant superintendence". He presided at a weekly meeting of masters "when enquiries were made, and explanations given, and any question which might have arisen determined". Bellasis recommended the practice to Newman so as to prevent the masters developing their own schemes. He further remarked that Pope was used to the system of keeping silence in the dormitories.²⁵ St John's diary reveals

22. Newman to St John, 14 Jul 1863, *L&D* XX, p.493

23. Bellasis to Newman, 21 & 23 Jan 1862, BOA; Newman to Arnold, 12 Jan 1862 & Newman to St John, 15 Jan 1862, *L&D* XX, pp.120-1 & 127-8

24. Bellasis to Newman, 24 Jan 1862, BOA. The explanation given to Arnold can be inferred from his sober and discreet description of the 'strike' to a friend. He explained that the masters resigned en masse to force the concession of demands. As it was inconvenient to do so, Newman accepted their resignations. (Arnold to T.A. Collinson, 10 Mar 1862, *Letters of Thomas Arnold the younger, 1850-1900*, ed. J. Bertram, London, 1980, p.122)

25. Bellasis to Newman, 24 Jan 1862, BOA

that the advice was quickly acted upon.²⁶ Newman kept Bellasis fully informed.²⁷ His reports about the masters were frank and incisive, indicating he soon had his finger on the pulse of the school: "Arnold and Pope promise well — and Fr St John";²⁸ neither of the returning masters was satisfactory — "we cannot quite join the new and the old [...] and there are signs of a party movement already".²⁹

As the returning masters were men Darnell had appointed, it is not surprising that they did not meet Newman's more stringent requirements and that he wished to replace them. Marshall lacked stamina for the work³⁰ and had difficulty enforcing discipline. Rougemont had been kept on despite Newman's attempts to persuade Darnell that he was not up to the work.³¹ Newman doubted whether Rougemont had taught the boys anything "in arithmetic or mathematics [...] that they have not been taught by the *books* themselves". He asked Bellasis to make discreet enquiries about it through his eldest son.³² However, the task of finding suitable replacements proved to be more difficult than expected.³³ No-one had been engaged for more than a term, but at Easter 1862 contracts

26. "Tue 4 Feb determined on meeting of Masters every Saturday at 2. [...] Talked over his [Pope's] school at Gibraltar. Intend to introduce the discipline there observed.

Sat 8 Feb Met in Masters' Room. The Father. Self. Arnold. Pope. Marshall & Rougemont. Spoke principally on the subject of the discipline in the dormitories & determined to use the Prefect principally for that purpose. The Tutors superintending until the Prefects could obtain order." (St John's diary, 1862, BOA)

27. Even when there was no news, Newman kept the lines of communication open. "I have nothing particular to tell you — but I thought you might like a line", he began on one occasion. (Newman to Bellasis, 5 Feb 1862, *L&D* XX, p.148)

28. Newman to Bellasis, 5 Feb 1862, *L&D* XX, p.148

29. Newman to Bellasis, 1 Mar 1862, *L&D* XX, p.160

30. Newman to Bellasis, 16 Feb 1862, *L&D* XX, p.152

31. Newman to R. Pope, 22 Oct 1862, *L&D* XX, p.320

32. Newman to Bellasis, 20 Apr 1862, *L&D* XX, p.190

33. Newman asked Bellasis to find someone to teach the elements. Bellasis investigated via Allies whether they could engage a Poor School teacher from the Catholic Training College at Hammersmith, but it proved too difficult. (Newman to Bellasis, 16 Feb 1862, *L&D* XX, p.152 & Bellasis to Newman, 19 Feb 1862, BOA) Newman asked Bellasis to get "a young man (a gentleman) who will for £50 a year and his board and lodging, take a part in both the *teaching* and *discipline*". (Newman to Bellasis, 6 Mar 1862, *L&D* XX, p.163) On the school's behalf Bellasis engaged a young convert as a reading, writing and arithmetic master. He turned out to be incompetent and broke down on the first day, and had to be dismissed. (Bellasis to Newman, 10 Feb; 8, 12 & 22 Mar 1862, BOA & Newman to Bellasis, 12 & 21 Mar 1862, *L&D* XX, pp.167 & 174) The convert was Edward Scanlan, aged 27, who had studied at King's College, London and St Augustine's College, Canterbury. He had advertised himself as a tutor in the *Weekly Register*.

were effectively renewed.³⁴ Only Miss Mitchell declined to stay. She returned after the summer and left for good in 1863.³⁵ The process of weeding out unsatisfactory masters took several years. In July 1865 La Serre resigned and returned to France.³⁶ The easing out of Marshall was postponed due to the pleadings of Arnold and Pope, and a compromise was reached: Marshall remained as a "master (i.e. *in* School) not Tutor (i.e. *out* of School)".³⁷ His departure in the summer of 1866 was friendly: at Newman's request, Bellasis helped him into the legal profession.³⁸

Rougemont's activities could easily have put an end to the school. He turned out to be a thief and philanderer. He resigned in June 1862 but disappeared before the end of term. Items stolen from boys were found in his room, along with moustaches and coloured neckties. Love letters, linen betraying "a bad disease" and news that he had slept out at night indicated worse. He had made off with a valuable gold watch belonging to a boy, on the pretext of getting it repaired, but it was never returned. The boy's father preferred his son to think it was lost, rather than let him realise that a priest could have been guilty of theft.³⁹ Rougemont fled to Ireland where he obtained a position as a tutor for a magistrate's family. He absconded with jewellery and other valuables, but was caught and received a six-year sentence. This news was reported in the press⁴⁰ but his connection

34. On Hope-Scott's advice the titles of first, second and third masters were modified. Arnold was re-appointed as Head Classical Master with responsibility for teaching the fifth and fourth forms Classics, English language and history. (Newman's memorandum: Arnold's terms of engagement, 6 Mar 1862, BOA) R. Pope became First Master of the Lower School, and Rougemont Master in Mathematics and Physics. (Staff lists, 13 Jan & n.d. [spring 1862], BOA)

35. Bellasis was asked to help find a replacement, but he seems to have been uncertain about the dame's role because he enquired, "What is the nature of the arrangement you propose to make with your dames?". He received no answer. (Bellasis to Newman, 4 Mar 1862, BOA & Newman to Bellasis, 6 Mar 1862, *L&D* XX, p.163) It is likely that Newman was reluctant to commit himself to a particular arrangement so soon after the crisis.

36. Newman wanted La Serre removed from "all *superintendence* of the boys" and confined "to the mere duty of a *french* master". (Newman to St John, 31 Dec 1862, *L&D* XX, p.382)

37. Newman explained that he withdrew the tutorship because of Marshall's poor discipline, but Marshall gave Moody a different story: separate tutors were no longer needed as the plan of separate houses was being given up. Marshall's salary was reduced from £100 to £75 for a term, but then restored. (Newman to Bellasis, 20 Apr 1862, *L&D* XX, p.190; Moody's diary, 20 Mar & 11 Apr 1862, BOA; *Day book*, 17 Dec 1861, 17 Jul & 17 Dec 1862, BOA)

38. He followed the advice of Bellasis, trained as a barrister, and became Chief Magistrate, then Chief Justice of the Gold Coast. He was knighted in 1882.

39. Gaisford to Newman, 23 Oct 1862, BOA

40. *Morning Star*, 18 Oct 1862

with the school was not spotted or made public.⁴¹

A year after the crisis Newman composed a "Circular to the masters, tutors, and dames of the Oratory School" in which he thanked them for a successful year and re-emphasised their complementary roles. The Fathers had "at a word given up their own engagements and personal objects, in order to save the School". He congratulated "the Masters and Tutors on their magnificent success in attaching the boys to them, in setting their minds in the right direction, in teaching them what discipline is, in making them obedient, and in advancing them in their studies". He expressed gratitude for

the assistance, so indispensable to our welfare, of the Matrons, for the unwearied vigilance with which they have watched over the bodily and moral health of the boys, have made school a second home to them, and have [...] shielded them from the illnesses which we hear of round about us.

Newman congratulated them all on the peace and harmony that prevailed among them.⁴² His observations on the healthy state of affairs were reiterated by Marshall, who referred to "the real fraternal love" among the masters: it was fortunate they "pull so well together" because they depended on each other for society, given its absence in Birmingham.⁴³ Such comments and the absence of staff squabbles indicated sound arrangements and wise management.

One of the founding ideas had been to provide a better academic education than the Catholic colleges. The higher fees were to enable the school to secure first-class schoolmasters and to avoid a reliance on pupil-teachers.⁴⁴ The main source of masters was the pool of well-educated converts. As products of the public schools and the two ancient universities, they were precisely what Newman wanted. They provided vital credentials for status as a public school.⁴⁵ Some were recommended by promoters or

41. Newman to Bellasis, 27 Jun & 24 Jul 1862, pp.214–5 & 243; Newman to Neville, 3 Aug 1862, p.251; Newman to St John, 7 Aug & 24 Oct 1862, pp.254 & 324, all *L&D* XX

42. Circular to the masters, tutors, and dames of the Oratory School, 19 Dec 1862, *L&D* XX, pp.366–7

43. Brownlow, *op.cit.*, pp.6–7

44. The promoters might have moderated their outlook had they known about the system of boy-tutors, based on Wykeham's statutes, at Winchester. The top ten boys, usually prefects, each helped seven or eight younger boys with their composition work. They received two guineas p.a. per boy. (Clarendon Report I, p.144; III, p.368)

45. Masters in all public schools were effectively restricted to Oxford and Cambridge products. The typical

friends,⁴⁶ some volunteered,⁴⁷ others Newman sought out.⁴⁸ After the crisis Newman was able to carry out the selection himself.⁴⁹ No-one was better placed to tap this pool

master had also been to one of the major boarding schools. (T.W. Bamford, 'Public school masters: a nineteenth-century profession', *History of Education* VIII, 1979, p.31) For this reason Upton is correct in identifying the background of Oscott staff as an impediment to gaining public-school status. Besides, the bulk of teaching at Oscott fell on the theology students. (Upton, *op. cit.*, pp.64 & 66)

46. Allies recommended T.A. Pope, who taught at Yvetôt, Normandy. Newman was surprised Darnell had not appointed him, but he eventually joined his brother as a master in 1864. (Newman to Allies, 3 Aug 1860, *L&D* XIX, p.390) Mrs Ward recommended a lady as a possible dame. (Mrs F.R. Ward to Newman, 14 Sep 1860, BOA) Paley was recommended for his "almost unequalled powers as a teacher" by the Government's two Catholic school inspectors, T.W. Marshall and S.N. Stokes, and later by Acton who had heard from Throckmorton that he was an "excellent tutor". (Acton to Newman, 9 Jan 1859, BOA) In the aftermath of the crisis, Bowden recommended E. Coffin (Bowden to Bellasis, 5 Jan 1862, BOA) and Allies recommended Campbell and R.V. Pope.

Frederick Apthorp Paley (1815–88) was a Classical scholar at St John's College, Cambridge until forced to resign when a pupil of his became a Catholic. He converted, left Cambridge, but in 1860 returned as a private tutor.

47. Woodward enquired whether there might be an opening for himself and his wife in either the preparatory school or the more advanced one, where he understood the boys were to be "boarded and lodged in private houses". He was willing to supply references for his wife whose "example and manners would be of inestimable advantage to young people in any class of life". He did not deny an interest in having his offspring educated at the school, as he had ten children. (Woodward to Newman, 4 Mar 1858, BOA)

Jonathan Henry Woodward was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, became vicar at St James's, Bristol and converted in 1851.

48. Newman's list of possible masters in 1858 featured Allies, Arnold, Coffin, Palmer and Woodward. (Mar 1858, *L&D* XVIII, p.296n) Newman offered the first post, as assistant master to Darnell, to the priest Walker, but Ullathorne decided he could not spare him. He had taught for 10 years at Oscott, four years on the rudiments of Latin and Greek with the junior classes, and six years on the "usual College course of Metaphysics and Moral Philosophy", with a little advanced Classics. He regretted that Latin and Greek composition were so abandoned at the Catholic colleges. (Walker to Darnell, 22 Dec 1858, BOA)

Edmund Coffin was educated at Harrow and Christ Church, Oxford. He converted in 1851, and declined a post at the school.

William Palmer (1811–79) was educated at Rugby, and was an undergraduate and Fellow at Magdalen College, Oxford. He became a Classics tutor at the University of Durham, was converted in 1855 and moved to Rome.

Henry Martyn Walker (1821–86) was educated Oriel College, Oxford. He became a curate at Hardenhuish, was converted in 1846 and ordained in 1851.

49. Apart from Arnold and R.V. Pope, the converts who taught at the school during the period 1862–72 included:

Septimus Andrews (1832–1920?), Westminster School, Christ Church, Oxford, converted in 1869;
 Henry William Challis (1841–98), Merchant Taylors' School, Merton College, Oxford, converted in 1866;
 Charles Edward Bernard Davis, London University;
 Joseph William Drew (1842–96), St Alban's Hall, Oxford, converted in 1864;
 J.J. Flockhart, Jesus College, Cambridge;
 Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844–89), Highgate School, Balliol College, Oxford, received into the Catholic Church by Newman at the Birmingham Oratory in 1866;
 William Henry Kelke, Brasenose College, Oxford, converted in 1867;

than Newman but even he found that "public school men are rare".⁵⁰ Unfortunately for the school, these converts were, for the most part, birds of passage who sought a temporary refuge after becoming Catholics until they decided on their future. About half became priests, while others entered the legal profession.⁵¹ Two of the three cradle Catholics appointed were ex-pupils.⁵²

Newman chose men who were not only educated but scholarly.⁵³ However, scholastic aptitude had its drawbacks. Newman realised that "a very superior man" like Arnold should not teach the younger boys. Even with the older ones he tended to teach above them and neglect their grammar. On the other hand, like his father, "he opens a boy's mind".⁵⁴ The name of Arnold had helped rescue the school but ultimately the school could not meet the price he demanded. Dissatisfaction with his remuneration (£400 p.a. plus accommodation for his family and places for his three sons at the school) became

Thomas Alder Pope (1819–1904), Jesus College, Cambridge, converted in 1853;

John Thomas Walford (1834–94), King's Scholar at Eton, Scholar and Fellow at King's College, Cambridge, converted in 1865.

Two had experience of schoolmastering: Andrews had been at Westminster School (1860–65), and Walford at Harrow then Eton (1861–64).

50. Newman to St John, 26 Aug 1863, *L&D* XX, p.512

51. Walford and Hopkins joined the Society of Jesus; Andrews and Drew became secular priests; T.A. Pope joined the Birmingham Oratory; Challis and Kelke became barristers.

52. John Marie Scott Stokes (1847–1918), the nephew of Scott Nasmyth Stokes, was not unlike the pupil-teachers at the colleges in that he returned to the Oratory with a vocation to the priesthood in mind. He taught for several years up to 1870 and was in charge of the teaching of French. He had lived his first six years in France and joined the school at the beginning, leaving in 1862 and working in the Portuguese Office for a year.

William John Sparrow (1850–1914) was a pupil from 1863 to 1867, and a master and tutor from 1869 to 1874. He taught arithmetic, Classics and English to the younger boys. He went to London University and became a barrister. He was made a member of the Liverpool School Board and of the Catholic Education Council.

Edmund H. Alleguen — no biographical details found — was master at the school 1862–94.

53. Arnold returned to university work and became a Fellow of the Royal University of Ireland and Professor of English Language and Literature. Newman rated Andrews a "good classical scholar". Hopkins had gained a double first and went on to become an eminent poet. Walford had been a Scholar and Fellow at King's College, Cambridge. Examples of publications by masters who were at the school in the period 1862–72 are: T. Arnold, *Manual of English literature*, 1862; H.W. Challis, *A letter to J.S. Mill ... on the necessity of geometry and the association of ideas*, Oxford, 1867; W.H. Kelke, *An epitome of constitutional law and cases*, London, 1907; T.A. Pope, *An introduction to the history of France*, London, 1860.

54. Newman to Simeon, 22 Aug 1864, *L&D* XXI, p.205

more acute after the publication of the Clarendon Report.⁵⁵ Permission to boost his income by taking in boys as lodgers was effectively denied.⁵⁶ At the time, he was drifting away from the Catholic Church. A critical moment arose when Newman and St John prevented him giving a boy a translation of Döllinger's *Kirche und kirchen* as an extra prize.⁵⁷ He left at Easter 1865 to become a private tutor at Oxford.⁵⁸ His relatively huge salary was more than the School could afford and had only been justified by the special circumstances created by the crisis, and the prospect of a significant increase in school numbers.⁵⁹ By comparison, in the academic year 1869/70 the bill for a full complement of seven masters amounted to £525.⁶⁰ By then stagnant numbers had limited the financial inducements that it was possible to offer.⁶¹

Studies and extra-curricular activities

55. Arnold based his case for an increase on statistics from Rugby, a school with similar fees: £90 18s 9d, compared with £85 1s 0d at the Oratory School. The fee elements for tuition at Rugby, £28 5s 6d per boy, were divided (not equally) among the assistant masters. Arnold argued that the equivalent total for the school, £1590, ought to be shared among its masters. His equivalents at Rugby, the four senior Classical masters, each received £600 from boarding profits, £120 from the foundation and between £840 and £897 from the tuition element of fees. He acknowledged the school did not have the economies of scale of Rugby, but nevertheless requested a "considerable addition" to his salary, as well as a means by which it might increase in line with pupil numbers. (Arnold to Newman, 6 Oct 1864, BOA)

56. Newman's memorandum 9 Sep 1862, *L&D* XX, p.269. Arnold pushed for a larger salary to satisfy family needs: he had seven children. (Arnold to Newman, 5 Jan 1864, Arnold, *Letters of Thomas Arnold the younger*, p.140)

57. T. Arnold, *Passages in a wandering life*, London, 1900, pp.179–80. Döllinger's book was later placed on the Index.

58. Arnold to Newman, 6 & 10 Oct, 6 & 12 Nov 1864, BOA; Newman to Arnold, 8 & 11 Oct, 3 & 14 Nov 1864, *L&D* XXI, pp.254, 256–7, 284 & 291. He hoped to imitate what Paley was doing at Cambridge. (Arnold to Dean Stanley, 5 Apr 1865, Arnold, *Letters of Thomas Arnold the younger*, p.146)

59. In the term before the crisis the total annual salary bill was £800: Moody receiving £300, Darnell £150, Marshall, Oxenham and Rougemont £100 each, La Serre £50. After the crisis the bill rose by £200. These figures exclude the paid services of the drill serjeant, the singing master and the drawing master. (*Day book*, 17 Dec 1861 & 17 Jul 1862, BOA)

60. R.V. Pope was the highest paid master at £125, though he had initially been paid £200. (List of masters, their pay and their duties for 1869/70, BOA) This does not appear to square with Newman later saying the maximum pay for a master was £70 after Arnold's departure, unless Pope's income from specialised tuition was regarded as separate. (Newman to Ornsby, 14 Jun 1877, *L&D* XXVIII, p.205) Shrobsbree refers to a 'black economy' at public schools before the reforms of the 1860s. Masters boosted income by means of private tuition, extra subjects and boarding. (Shrobsbree, *op. cit.*, pp.40–1)

61. The salary bill had risen to £751 for six masters by 1882, which Newman felt was insufficient to attract the best teachers. Pay ranged from £300, with a house, for Pope, down to £21, plus board, for a German master. (Newman to the Duke of Norfolk, 23 Jan & 13 May 1882, *L&D* XXX, pp.54 & 85)

The declaration in the prospectus that studies were those of an English public school was no glib advertisement or idle boast. Genuine academic excellence was aimed at.⁶² Parents showed no signs of being fobbed off with the trappings of a public school. Their requests confirm that there was a demand for, as well as supply of, scholarship. A measure of their confidence and commitment was that they were prepared to badger Newman about the curriculum, teaching methods and text books being used.⁶³ Simeon complained that his son was backward and unconscious of his incompetence, due, he supposed, "to the general lowness of the standard among Catholics". Newman firmly countered this impression. Having taken the boy for Terence, he could vouch for his progress. The problem was the boy's poor retention rather than low standards. However he did admit that he and St John were concerned over "the difficulty of drumming grammar into the heads" of the weaker boys. St John and Pope brought the boys on in their grammar but it was neglected when they moved up to Arnold.⁶⁴ Simeon also complained of the lack of private tuition, but this was impossible to remedy because of the cost, though extra tuition could be arranged on request.⁶⁵ In 1864 several parents complained that no work had been set for the long vacation.⁶⁶ The dilemma Newman faced was that some parents did not want holiday work. The ideal solution, Newman thought, was to set each boy separately the work his

62. St John's diary shows the constant concern of himself and the other masters for academic excellence. They were frequently disappointed that progress was below their optimistic expectations. In the *School boy's diary* (BOA) the ever increasing references to school-work reflect the author's process of maturation; from a twelve-year-old, eager for games and adventure, to an 18-year-old youth, with a passion for English literature and a capacity for serious Classical scholarship. Belloc's letters to his mother from school betray a love of the Classics. (Belloc-Lowdnes M., *The young Hilaire Belloc*, New York, 1956, pp.64 & 70-2)

63. Colyar stressed the importance of foreign languages. (Moody's diary, 24 Jan 1860, BOA) Simeon complained that the English pronunciation of Latin was not used. Newman explained that he had been out-voted by St John and Arnold in favour of the Italian pronunciation, that adopted throughout the Catholic Church. (Newman to Simeon, 22 Aug 1864, *L&D* XXI, p.206) The system of teaching Greek was challenged by Sheil. Newman explained that formerly, books such as the *Eton grammar* had assigned to nouns ten declensions, whereas more recent books, those "most serviceable for the boys", relied on different declension-theories. The school had chosen to move with the fashion rather than rely on second-rate books. (Newman to Sheil, 6 Jan 1864, *L&D* XXI, pp.8-9)

64. This concern needs to be considered in the context of the mid-nineteenth century when the teaching of Latin and Greek had very modest results with the majority of boys, even in the great schools. (Chandos, *op.cit.*, chapter entitled 'A little learning', pp.155-66) Among the major schools, only Shrewsbury was serious about the teaching of Classics before 1861. (Shrosbree, *op. cit.*, pp.29-30)

65. Simeon to Newman, 18 Aug 1864 & Newman to Simeon, 22 Aug 1864, *L&D* XXI, pp.204-5. Prince Doria received private tuition from Drew at £12 10s per term. (Newman to Prince Doria's agents, 6 Sep 1865, *L&D* XXII, p.47) Prince Beccadelli was offered private tuition at £10 per term. (Newman to Acton, 13 Mar 1867, *L&D* XXIII, p.79)

66. It had been set in previous years but was remitted on this occasion because of an outbreak of measles the previous term.

father wanted.⁶⁷ The level of interest in scholarship compared favourably with Eton where there was little incentive from home to study.⁶⁸ The Oratory School library was well established in 1864 with senior and junior sections, a boy librarian and three assistants, and an elaborate system of rules and fines.⁶⁹

Newman was anxious about the effect of post-school examinations on school work: "This modern system is essentially un-Oxford — it is a system of cramming and shallowness". The school ought to make good scholars out of good boys, "and it is not simply our aim, but our passion to do so. If there is anything I detest, it is the superficial knowledge of many books."⁷⁰ His maxim was, "'a little, but well;' that is, really know what you say you know". Applied to the teaching of Classics, it was better to have a thorough understanding of how Latin syntax works, "how the separate portions of a sentence hang together", than to have read through many Classical authors.⁷¹

Educational practice from Oxford and Cambridge had been distilled into a pure form in Newman's Dublin lectures. The public schools formed part of this educational process by supplying the foundations. At the heart of his concept of a liberal education was the principle that knowledge is its own end, that is, it need not to be pursued for immediate tangible benefits but for its own sake, for the cultivation and perfection of the intellect. Although these ideas pre-dated his experience of running a school, Newman had already heard of their acceptance at Eton. Johnson,⁷² "by repute the most inspiring

67. Newman to Simeon, 22 Aug 1864, *L&D* XXI, pp.205–6. A letter from Darnell to the young Duke of Norfolk survives in which he specifies his daily dose of vacation Latin, encouraging him to "get this dreadful bore [...] over as soon as possible after Mass and breakfast". He encouraged him to practice music and French with his sisters, and to prepare the first canto of the 'Lady of the Lake' with a view to competing for a school prize. (Darnell to the Duke of Norfolk, 21 Jul 1861, Arundel Castle archives, C.581)

68. A master at Eton reflected: "in the holidays there is hardly a father who tries to divert his son's mind from dogs and horses". (W. Johnson, 'On the education of the reasoning faculties', *Essays on a liberal education*, ed. F.W. Farrar, London, 1867, p.321)

69. A notice *Oratory School Library: Rules* is reproduced in *Extracts from a school boy's diary*, pp.8–9.

70. Newman to Simeon, 22 Aug 1864, *L&D* XXI, p.205

71. Newman's principle, applied to higher studies, was that "A thorough knowledge of one science and a superficial acquaintance with many, are not the same thing; a smattering of a hundred things or a memory for detail, is not a philosophical or comprehensive view." (Newman, *Idea of a university*, pp.144 & 335)

72. William (Cory) Johnson (1823–92) was a master at Eton and a Fellow of King's College, Cambridge from 1845 until 1872. He considered himself a disciple of Newman.

teacher in the public schools",⁷³ had declared that Newman's lectures had been well received, and given masters and boys "a new feeling about universities altogether: and that no book had ever come out which created so great and good a sensation amongst the boys and men at Eton".⁷⁴

Newman endorsed the traditional view that the study of Classics was "the best instrument for mental cultivation and the best guarantee for intellectual progress".⁷⁵ Nevertheless he favoured a broader curriculum than Darnell and the public schools of the time.⁷⁶ Though similar in content to the curriculum at the Catholic colleges, Newman's choice was inspired by his own convictions and background rather than by practice elsewhere.⁷⁷ The curriculum included mathematics, English, history, geography, French and Christian doctrine, but the staple diet was Classics.⁷⁸ Grammar and, to a lesser extent, mathematics occupied a special place in encouraging accuracy of thought, for Newman held strongly that "the first step in intellectual training is to impress upon a boy's mind the idea of science, method, order, principle, and system; of rule and

73. Chandos, *op.cit.*, p.155

74. Thynne to Newman, n.d., *L&D* XVIII, p.519n. Thynne's comments were based on a meeting with Johnson. Though won over by Newman's ideas, Johnson admitted that no more than one in a hundred boys had "a real desire of knowledge for its own sake — knowledge apart from imaginative excitement". (Johnson, *op.cit.*, p.326)

75. Newman argues his case in 'Christianity and letters'. (*Idea of a university*, pp.249–67) Ker has emphasised that, for Newman, what makes a liberal education is not the liberal arts themselves, but the discipline and mental cultivation arising therefrom. It has more to do with learning how to think than reading great books. (Ker, *The achievement of John Henry Newman*, London, 1990, pp.6–7)

76. Jackson states that the curriculum was as follows (though he does not declare his sources): first form — algebra, geometry, Latin, English history, scripture and French, plus practice in reading, writing and spelling; second form — geography added and elementary subjects dropped; third form — Greek and German added; fourth form — Latin composition begun; fifth form — elementary Greek prose begun. (Jackson, *op. cit.*, p.196)

77. Jackson is probably correct in claiming that Newman was influenced by the curriculum at Ealing School. Ealing was unusual at the time in that mathematics was compulsory and included more than just Euclid. Jackson also points out that Newman's emphasis on a broad curriculum is evident in his tutorial letters (as an undergraduate) to his sisters and brothers. However, these letters also show that Classics and mathematics counted for more than half his siblings' curriculum. (J. Jackson, *op. cit.*, pp.25, 34 & 49–50)

78. The order of importance of these subjects may perhaps be deduced from the number of forms into which the boys were divided: seven for Classics; five for maths; four for history; and three for French. (1865 classification list, BOA) German, Italian and Spanish were added later. This range of subjects contradicts Upton's claim that the curriculum was narrow: "Any departure from the practice of Eton was felt to be undesirable by the ex-Etonians who formed the committee to set up the Oratory School." (Upton, *op. cit.*, p.33)

exception, of richness and harmony".⁷⁹

It was in the teaching of Classics that the Oratory School differed from the secular colleges, by placing a greater emphasis on Classical authors rather than works of the Church Fathers.⁸⁰ Doing so in a way "consistent with Catholic habits and requirements"⁸¹ implied a careful selection of texts, and expurgation where necessary. Newman objected strongly to the lewdness of the texts he was forced to use when coaching the eldest Bellasis boy for the London University exams. The immoral thoughts introduced by Lucretius, Plautus and Terence were likely to lead to immoral desires and actions. Some of the books were steeped in indecency and impurity: one involved "unnatural liberties between boys".⁸²

Acton interpreted Newman's caution as evidence that he had altered his views on education since the Dublin lectures, and inclined towards Gaume.⁸³ Others suspected Newman of exactly the opposite tendency.⁸⁴ No contradiction is implied.⁸⁵ It was

79. Newman, *Idea of a university*, p.xix. Mathematics was an integral part of the syllabus at Oscott, but, according to Upton, it was "considered undesirable by the converts who were instrumental in setting up the Oratory School". (Upton, *op. cit.*, p.39)

80. Upton is correct in arguing that one of the grounds on which Oscott was not deemed a public school was its curriculum, but not in his reasoning; that it gave too little time to Classics. It was the content that made the difference. As Upton indicates elsewhere, the curriculum at the Oratory School was humanist and geared up to Oxford and Cambridge; at Oscott it was more religious in being a preparation for priestly training (and a foreign university system). (Upton, *op. cit.*, pp.3, 18, 26 & 37)

81. School prospectus, n.d. [spring 1862], BOA

82. Newman to Bellasis, 25 Jan 1868, *L&D* XXIV, pp.16–19. Under the advice of Hope-Scott, Bellasis sent the letter to Lord Granville, Chancellor of London University. It was shown to the Senate, but Bellasis was told there would be no changes unless the authorities were shamed into them! Bishop Grant advised Bellasis to pursue the matter himself, by taking it up "as the father of a family". Bellasis prepared a letter to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, enclosing Newman's, but it seems it was not accepted. (Bellasis, *Memorials of Mr Serjeant Bellasis*, p.195n) However, the University of London adjusted their syllabus the following year along the lines requested. (H. Tristram, 'London University and Catholic education', *Dublin Review*, 19 Oct 1936, p.278)

83. Acton to Döllinger, n.d. [end of Feb 1862], Döllinger, *op. cit.* I, p.250. L'Abbé Gaume's writings ignited a lively controversy in France on the place of pagan authors in Classical studies. His exaggerated thesis argued that the resurrection of interest in the paganism of antiquity during the Renaissance had paved the way for the Revolution and other social ills. He wanted the pagan authors excluded from the greater part of the curriculum and replaced by Christian authors, even though the pagan authors had had a secure place in the colleges for three centuries. (*The Catholic encyclopedia* VI, New York, 1909, pp.398–9)

84. W.G. Ward was sympathetic to Gaume's theory but his own views were less extreme. See his letter to Newman, 15 Feb 1861 (W. Ward, *William George Ward and the Catholic revival*, London, 1893, pp.148–9, 196 & 454–5) and letter to the editor, *Rambler*, Feb 1849, p.457.

another manifestation of Newman's pursuit of that delicate balance between two traditions. By contrast, the Protestant public schools adopted an ambivalent attitude to Classical literature: the choicest pieces were "frequently contrary to the spirit of prevailing Christian doctrine and morals".⁸⁶ The school's dilemma was reproduced in the search for unobjectionable history books. More generally, "The whole question of School books and School prizes is an enormous difficulty to Catholics."⁸⁷

The school's most notable extra-curricular activity was the annual Latin play.⁸⁸ There were three performances in late May to mark St Philip's day (26th May): the first attended by the boys, children from the Oratory orphanage, and members of the Oratory; the second by the church congregation and local tradespeople; and the last by parents, old boys and dignitaries.⁸⁹ The inspiration came from Newman who had acted in four Latin plays as a boy at Ealing.⁹⁰ Newman chose the *Phormio* for the first school play, which was performed in May 1865. Three other plays were performed: the *Andria* and the *Aulularia* of Plautus, and Terence's *Eunuchus*, which Newman renamed the *Pincerna* (Cup-bearer). Preparations began the previous September when the plays were first read in class. Afterwards Newman took the actors alone or in small groups, construed the Latin, made the boys construe it and then heard them repeat it by heart. He helped them deliver the Latin verse and advised them how to act their parts. His enthusiasm revealed itself in various ways: discussion with St John about casting; detailed instructions for

85. Newman had articulated his attitude to secular literature in the *Idea of a university* (pp.233–4): "the Church's true policy is not to aim at the exclusion of Literature from Secular Schools, but at her own admission into them. [...] She fears no knowledge, but she purifies all; she represses no element of our nature, but cultivates the whole." The Gaume controversy began as Newman started composing his Dublin lectures, and Culler describes how he used them to refute the new theory. (Culler, *op. cit.*, pp.263–4)

86. Chandos, *op.cit.*, p.31

87. The school began using *The student's Hume: a history of England from the earliest times to the revolution of 1688, abridged and continued down to 1858* (London, 1859), but had to discard it on account of it being "so flippantly irreligious". Newman would have liked to have published a history of England for school use, but felt the cost was prohibitive. (Newman to Sheil, 6 Jan 1864, *L&D XXI*, pp.8–9)

88. The second of four reasons he gave for only writing two books in 15 years was "the time I have given to the Schoolboys, especially in preparing and editing four Latin Plays for their use". (Newman's journal, 14 Oct 1874, *Autobiographical writings*, p.272)

89. *Further extracts from a school boy's diary*, 25, 26 & 28 May 1866, BOA. Jackson points out that the Latin plays at Ealing were performed on three Grand Nights. (J. Jackson, *op. cit.*, p.41)

90. In 1813, at the age of twelve, he played Hegio in the *Phormio* of Terence; in 1814 he played Pythias in the *Eunuchus*; in 1815, Syrus in the *Adelphi*; and in 1816, Darus in the *Andria*.

scenery; attendance at dress rehearsals in old age.⁹¹ For each play Newman had a specially expurgated edition printed with his own translations, detailed grammatical notes and Latin prologues.⁹² (It seems that the idea of publishing adaptations was copied at Radley and Westminster.)⁹³ It is noteworthy that Jesuit education used expurgated Classical texts for teaching but rejected the Classical plays for acting. Instead the Jesuits wrote their own Latin plays.⁹⁴

The prospectus stated that there were no extra charges. Music, drawing and other studies that were usually considered as extras, were to be at the discretion of the headmaster.⁹⁵ The policy on music reflected Newman's view that it was a common mistake to begin learning an instrument too early: young boys were reluctant to practise as it entailed sacrificing playtime;⁹⁶ masters begrudged giving their free time for

91. Newman to St John, 5 Aug 1865, *L&D* XXII, p.24; Newman to Miss Deane, 26 May 1888, *L&D* XXXI, pp.256–7; Tristram 'The Oratory School', Jan 1933, pp.7–11; *Further extracts from a school boy's diary*, 19 Apr & 28 May 1866, 9 Feb 1869, BOA

92. The originals are kept at the Oratory School, Woodcote. Newman's prologues to the *Phormio*, *Pincerna* and *Andria* are reproduced in *Verses on various occasions* (London, 1874; 1896, pp.375–82). The following were eventually published: T.M. Plautus, *Aulularia*, with English notes to assist the representation (adapted for the use of the school of the Oratory), ed. Newman, London, 1883; P. Terentius, *Andria*, with English notes to assist the representation (adapted for the use of the school of the Oratory), ed. Newman, London, 1883; P. Terentius, *Pincerna*, with English notes to assist the representation (adapted for the use of the school of the Oratory), ed. Newman, London, 1883; P. Terentius, *Phormio*, with English notes to assist the representation (adapted for the use of the school of the Oratory), ed. Newman, London, 1883.

93. P. Terentius, *Andria*, as curtailed for acting at St Peter's College, Radley, ed. W. Wagner & G. Colman, Oxford, 1887; P. Terentius, *The Phormio of Terence*, as curtailed for acting at St Peter's College, Radley, ed. W. Wagner & G. Colman, Oxford, 1885 — Newman was sent the above by the editor, a former Warden of Radley. (Newman to Wilson, 19 Mar 1890, *L&D* XXXI, p.291)

P. Terentius, *The Phormio of Terence as it is performed at the Royal College of St Peter, Westminster*, ed. G. Colman, Westminster, 1891; P. Terentius, *The Andria of Terence, as it is performed at the Royal College of St Peter, Westminster*, ed. G. Colman, Westminster, 1894; P. Terentius, *The Famulus of Terence, as it is performed at the Royal College of St Peter, Westminster*, ed. G. Colman, Westminster, 1907

A Terence play was performed annually at Westminster. Complaints arose in the 1830s about the unsuitability of the *Eunuchus*. The authority's defence was that the acting version had been "judiciously castigated", but in 1846 the performance was suspended. A strong reaction by old boys saw the play reinstated. (W.L. Collins, *The public schools: Winchester, Westminster, Shrewsbury, Harrow, Rugby; notes of their history and tradition*, Edinburgh, 1867, pp.142–3 & 158) For an account of the Westminster Latin play see Chapter V, *ibid.*, pp.142–60.

94. Chadwick, *op. cit.*, p.134

95. Only the headmaster was at liberty to decide if, and when, a boy should start. If parents disagreed, these studies became extras. (School prospectus, n.d. [spring 1862], BOA) Music lessons became extras in 1872. (Circular letter to parents, 30 Jul 1872, *L&D* XXVI, p.143) A later, but pre-1879 prospectus (BOA) declared that music, drawing, dancing and books, as well as washing and medicine, were extras.

96. Music lessons were "generally a waste of time, unless a boy takes to them. Nothing can be had without practising — and boys grudge practising in play time." (Newman to Hope-Scott, 2 Feb 1862, *L&D* XX,

supervision of practice; without practice little progress was made.⁹⁷ Newman thought that music, unlike drawing, was "an important part of education, where a boy has a turn for it".⁹⁸ A considerable amount of music making took place, both choral and instrumental, much of which was employed in true Oratorian fashion — in divine worship.⁹⁹ Newman sometimes joined the boys in their recitals, playing second violin.¹⁰⁰ Exhibitions were staged.¹⁰¹ School journalism flourished.¹⁰² On alternate Sundays there were meetings of the debating and essay societies. The debates were of a high standard and masters were sometimes invited to speak.¹⁰³ Boys were taken by masters for walks, making bonfires, 'botanizing', skating, fishing, swimming, gymnastics and rowing. They were allowed to keep small pets, "on the express understanding that they would keep and feed them well", and to cultivate small garden plots.¹⁰⁴ In the summer there was an annual school outing

p.147)

97. Newman to Wegg-Prosser, 30 Jan 1866, *L&D* XXII, p.144

98. "It is a great resource when they are thrown on the world — it is social amusement — perfectly innocent — and what is so great a point employs their thoughts. Drawing does not do this. It is often a great point for a boy to escape from himself; and music enables him." Newman proceeded to discuss the progress of Richard Bellasis's violin lessons with his father. (Newman to Bellasis, 4 Sep 1865, *L&D* XXII, p.42)

99. The oratorio was originated by the Oratorians in Rome, and named after them. The *School boy's diary* (BOA) makes frequent references to Sunday and feast-day music. For example, at High Mass on Whit Sunday 1866 Haydn's First Mass was played by boys and a violin teacher.

100. *Further extracts from a school boy's diary*, 27 Oct 1867, BOA; Newman's diary, 2 Jul 1865, *L&D* XXII, p.3. See also Bellasis, *Newman as a musician*, London, 1892 (re-printed in Bellasis, *Coram cardinali*, London, 1916).

101. In 1862 H. Formby, a friend of Newman, exhibited his illustrations for a Bible and Church history. (Newman's diary, 25 Nov 1862, *L&D* XX, p.359) The inclusion of an exhibition room in Newman's building plans indicates it was not a one-off event.

102. The first magazine published, *Stale News*, appeared in the winter of 1863/64. In the Lent term of 1868 the weekly magazine, *The Early Bird* or *The Tuesday Tomtit*, edited by J.M. Stokes and two fifth formers, claimed the first published poem of another master, G.M. Hopkins's 'The elopement'. Each issue was limited to three hand-written copies. It inspired a rival magazine called *The Weekly Wasp*. For more information see the anonymous articles, 'Early magazines', *Oratory School Magazine* XIII, Nov 1895, pp.5-9; XIV, Mar 1896, pp.28-9.

103. The motions Edward Bellasis recorded in his diary indicate the topical issues of the day: the liberty of the press; whether a good speaker or writer has most influence; whether music or painting has done most to promote civilisation; whether the printing press or the steam engine has done most for mankind; the good and bad effects of novels; the good and bad effects of athletics; public or private education; the advantages and disadvantages of the monitorial system; Classical v. general education; voluntary v. compulsory education; should modern languages be a general study?; pleasures of hope v. pleasures of memory; town v. country; army v. navy; was Hannibal or Alexander the greater general?; the influence of the statesmen v. influence of a general; ancient v. modern orators; is emigration a good thing for England?; the expediency of capital punishment. (*Further extracts from a school boy's diary*, BOA)

104. La Serre, *Memoirs*, pp.7-8, Arundel Castle archives, MD.2119

to Rednal.¹⁰⁵ There were outdoor games such as rounders, 'prisoner's base' and paper chases. Besides a two-day annual athletics competition, the main organised games were cricket and football. In days before inter-school fixtures, the sides for matches were chosen from a variety of subdivisions of the school.¹⁰⁶ The Fathers as well as the masters joined in games of football, and special games were organised for major feast days such as Michaelmas.¹⁰⁷

The school timetable was not a permanent fixture, but was altered, as and when necessary. One rearrangement took place in 1867.¹⁰⁸ On this occasion the changes were made to ease the burden on the masters.¹⁰⁹ It enabled them to take private pupils, as

105. Newman's diary, 20 Apr 1863, *L&D* XX, p.434

106. Those mentioned in the *School boy's diary* (BOA) were: older v. younger boys (and other form-related permutations), boys v. masters, Darnell's boys v. St John's boys, north v. south, gospel v. epistle, 67 & 68 Hagley Road v. Oratory House, first refectory table v. rest, first half of alphabet v. others, English v. foreigners, and actors v. non-actors. The only inter-school cricket fixtures were against Oscott and Beaumont. Cricket matches had already been established by Darnell as part of the school calendar. In 1861 the school was thrashed by Oscott in its first match. The following year they were much improved, but at the expense of a petition from neighbours which complained at the "Disregard of the Lord's Day exhibited by the Boys" who played cricket as on week days. Newman's reply drew a nice distinction. He explained that the school forbade Sunday games which annoyed or distressed neighbours, but not as a matter of conscience; only from a wish to live peaceably with others. He assured them that the school rule would be enforced with greater strictness. (Petition to Newman, 7 June 1862 & Newman to Myliss, 8 Jun 1862, *L&D* XX, p.204)

107. Moody's diary, 19 & 29 Sep 1859, BOA. At Eton in the 1860s the masters were invited to join the boys in their games of football, (Bamford, *The rise of the public schools*, p.76) while at Stonyhurst ecclesiastical staff joined in with football and handball. (B. Basset, *The English Jesuits from Campion to Martindale*, London, 1967, p.405)

108. The masters had been having difficulty supervising prep, which they took outside class-time. Newman suggested following the practice he had known at school, and adopted by other schools: instead of splitting school hours between classes and prep time, combining the two. A master could teach a class then rest for 20 minutes, during which time boys from his form would come to him with their difficulties. In this way masters could supervise most of their own boys' prep. (Newman to T.A. Pope, 11 Aug 1867, *L&D* XXIII, pp.291-2)

109. The idea was that they were free from noon to 6.00 pm and after 8.00 pm. The school day can be pieced together from several sources:

7.45-8.30	Prep ("saying impositions, or grammar, or lines, or (with the upper boys) translating into Latin")
8.30	Breakfast
9.30-12.00	Classes
1.00	Dinner
2.00-3.00	Prep time (Mon, Wed & Fri)
5.00-6.00	Private study (Mon, Wed & Fri)
6.00	Tea
6.30-8.30	Classes.

The hour for prep was to be supervised by an Oratorian and the private study by a prefect. (Newman to T.A. Pope, 11 Aug 1867, *L&D* XXIII, pp.291-2; Hopkins to Urquhart, 30 Sep 1867, *Further letters of*

well as prepare lessons and correct work. Even so, young masters like Hopkins found duties took up all their time.¹¹⁰ The school had a reputation for working the boys hard; the masters worked harder still!¹¹¹

A clue to Newman's views on study habits is provided in a reply to Sheil's request for his son to have a separate room. Besides the practical ruling that such rooms were reserved for senior boys paying higher fees, the request was turned down on educational grounds. Newman argued that there were considerable advantages in boys having to gain "the power of abstraction" by studying with other boys. The example of Dr Arnold was cited: in later life he attributed his powers of concentration, amidst distractions at home or elsewhere, to having gained this habit in the schoolroom at Winchester. Newman thought that, for the boy in question, a separate room would be a temptation to read books that were not relevant to his school studies.¹¹² Newman held that the study habits which assist the schoolboy in his acquisition of knowledge were "diligence, assiduity, regularity, despatch, persevering application".¹¹³ A "chief error of the day" lay in considering that "our true excellence comes not from within, but from without; not wrought out through personal struggle and sufferings, but following upon a passive exposure to influences" outside. It entailed "the theory that diversion is the instrument of improvement, and excitement the condition of right action".¹¹⁴ While emphasizing the importance of study, Newman was sensitive to the need of boys for play and free time. His automatic reaction to parents who asked for extra lessons was to remind them of the boys' reluctance to

Gerard Manley Hopkins, including his correspondence with Coventry Patmore, ed. C.C. Abbott, London, 1938; 1956, pp.43–4; School notice, 5 Nov 1869, BOA) The timetable was similar to that at Sedgley Park in 1863. (F. Roberts, *A history of Sedgley Park and Cotton College*, Preston, 1985, p.93) The length of the working day was not dissimilar to Winchester. (H. Staunton, *The great schools of England: an account of the foundation, endowment, and discipline of the chief seminaries of learning in England*, London, 1865, p.84)

110. Hopkin's diary, 4 Nov 1867, *The journals and papers of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, ed. H. House & G. Storey, London, 1959, p.158; Hopkins to Ballie, 12 Feb 1868 & Hopkins to Urquhart, 30 Sep 1867, *Further letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, pp.43–4 & 231

111. R.B. Martin, *Gerard Manley Hopkins: a very private life*, London, 1991, p.168. Walford testified that the masters were overworked at Eton, while the boys had too little to do. (Clarendon Report III, pp.265–7)

112. Newman to Sheil, 22 Jan 1867, XXIII, p.30

113. *Idea of a university*, p.128

114. 'The Tamworth Reading Room', (originally letters to *The Times*, Feb 1841) *Discussions and arguments on various subjects*, London, 1872; 1891, p.266

forfeit time outside classes.¹¹⁵ The complaints that under Darnell the play-hours were too broken up were accommodated.¹¹⁶ Major feast days and special occasions were marked with half or whole holidays and better food, with wine and toasts.¹¹⁷

After the crisis Newman introduced a more rigorous system of testing. Whilst disliking cramming, Newman maintained that regular tests had a specific use in training the intellect: "they impart self-confidence, they serve to bring home to a youth what he knows and what he does not, they teach him to bring out his knowledge and to express his meaning clearly".¹¹⁸ In February 1862 a system of monthly 'repetitions' was begun, a *viva voce* exam in which boys were examined, a form at a time, on work completed the previous month. This took place in the presence of Newman, St John and the form-master. Great emphasis was placed on 'learning by heart' since Newman insisted on perfect accuracy and readiness in the repetitions.¹¹⁹ It reflected Newman's stress on developing the memory at school.¹²⁰

End-of-term exams were conducted with more solemnity than under Darnell, and attended by Newman, who continued to set aside two or three days for the purpose.¹²¹

115. Newman discouraged Colyar from engaging a private tutor for his son as he was not backward. "He will learn more thoroughly and steadily, when he learns with others, than when he had to learn by himself, as would be the case with a private Tutor. [...] I think it would be best to let things take their course, and to be patient". (Newman to Colyar, 27 Sep 1862, *L&D* XX, p.278)

116. Hope-Scott to Newman, 11 Jan 1862 & Gaisford to Newman, 11 Jan 1862, BOA. The evening classes were moved to 2.00–4.00 in the summer to allow longer cricket matches. (*Further extracts from a school boy's diary*, 4 Jun 1866, BOA)

117. These included: 5 May (Ascension Day), 26 May (Corpus Christi), 29 Jun (SS Peter and Paul) 1864; 21 Feb (Newman's birthday and St Valentine, whose relics lay in the Oratory Church), 13 Mar (after the bishop examined the school on the catechism), 26 May (St Philip Neri) & 31 Oct (requested by Hope-Scott after a visit) 1865. (*Extracts from a school boy's diary*, BOA) Apart from holidays at Christmas, Easter, Shrovetide and Whitsun, Stonyhurst kept ten other feast days as holidays. (Taunton Report V, pp.332–3)

118. Newman to Northcote, 23 Feb 1872, *L&D* XXVI, p.26

119. Reminiscences of W.J. Sparrow, Tristram, 'The Oratory School', Dec 1932, pp.205–7

120. "Memory is one of the first developed of the mental faculties: a boy's business when he goes to school is to learn, that is, to store up things in his memory. For some years his intellect is little better than an instrument for taking in facts, or a receptacle for storing them. [...] Geography, chronology, history, language, natural history, he heaps up the matter of these studies as treasures for a future day." (Newman, *Idea of a university*, pp.127–8) For Newman's balanced emphasis on the 'digestive' and 'storehouse', or active and passive, functions of the intellect, see Culler, *op. cit.*, pp.206–8.

121. Newman to Miss Holmes, 9 Nov 1862, *L&D* XX, p.347. The 1861 school prospectus (BOA) had stated that Newman conducted the main exams three times a year, while exams in French were held at the start of each term. At Stonyhurst boys were examined four times a year by the Prefect of Studies. (Taunton

Not just content with these improvements, Newman emphasised the importance of the end-of-year exam by arranging for visiting examiners.¹²² Like Woodard, Newman turned down the option of the Oxford Middle School Exam.¹²³ Ideally Newman wished for an examiner from Oxford.¹²⁴ He had heard that Oxford University was considering extending its system of 'ambulatory' examiners to include public schools and he asked Arnold, then a private tutor in Oxford, for guidance.¹²⁵ As at other schools, prizes were used to stimulate academic endeavour.¹²⁶ When the Duke of Norfolk left the school in 1864 he presented it with funds for an annual prize, worth £20 in books.¹²⁷ Prizes were awarded for Classics (one for each of the lower forms), mathematics (four) and drawing (two).¹²⁸ Class lists (exam classifications) and prize lists were printed and sent to parents

Report V, p.328)

122. The first to examine, in 1863, was Adams, an academic an all-rounder. In 1865 Ornsby and Penny came for three days each, both of whom had been appointed by Newman at the Catholic University. In 1866 the examiner was Badham, a non-Catholic.

Walter Marsham Adams went to New College, Oxford and became a Catholic in 1861. Although Newman offered him a post at the school, he entered Inner Temple in November 1863. He wrote on early Egyptian religion as well as publishing *Outlines of geometry* (Melbourne, 1866) and a translation of the first book of *The Iliad* (London, 1873).

Robert Ornsby (1820–89) gained a First at Lincoln College, Oxford and became a Fellow of Trinity College. He converted in 1847 and became Professor of Latin and Greek at the Catholic University. He became tutor to the 15th Duke of Norfolk but returned to his university post in Dublin in 1874. In 1882 he was elected a Fellow of the Royal University of Ireland.

William Goodenough Penny (1807–1884) was educated at Westminster School and Christ Church, Oxford. He became a Catholic in 1844 and three years later a priest. He tutored in mathematics in one of the halls of the Catholic University.

Charles Badham, educated at Eton and Wadham College, Oxford, was headmaster of a proprietary school at Edgbaston.

123. Heeney, *op.cit.*, p.107

124. Someone sympathetic towards Catholics had been sounded out in 1863 but without success. He was Samuel William Wayte who was first a Scholar at Trinity College, then a Fellow and tutor, and from 1866 President. At Hurstpierpoint the custom of an annual exam conducted by an Oxford don was established in 1857. After the 1868 Public Schools Act, the practice was adopted at all schools. (*Ibid.*)

125. Arnold revealed that only Rugby had so far managed to secure one of these examiners officially, and that the usual practice was still for schools to engage examiners privately using their contacts at the universities. (Newman to Arnold, 28 Jan 1866, *L&D* XXII, pp.140–1 & Arnold to Newman, 9 Jun 1866, BOA)

126. Newman to Mrs Sparrow, 25 Aug 1863, *L&D* XX, p.511

127. The first Norfolk examination had six parts: Greek, Greek testament, Latin, written Latin, Euclid and learning by heart. (Classification and prize list, Midsummer 1865, BOA)

128. The school competition for the Classical prize appears to have been quite an ordeal: five hours a day,

with the bills.¹²⁹

As with other public schools the majority of boys did not go on to Oxford or Cambridge although studies were tailor-made for the transition. Analysis of the destinations of boys reveals that, of those who went to university, the vast majority went to Oxford.¹³⁰ Newman did not press for boys to enter colleges of Oxford and Cambridge: instead he worked to parental wishes.¹³¹ After the crisis, the demand for specialist coaching was greater for entrance exams for the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich.¹³² In 1863 a Woolwich 'grinder' was engaged to tutor four boys for five hours a day.¹³³ This temporary arrangement was superseded by a system of extra tuition by the permanent masters. Pope undertook the mathematics and drawing required for Woolwich, Sandhurst and London University.¹³⁴ His services were later extended to cover mathematics, as far as the London University BA, English history and literature, and general geography, as well as preparation for the India Civil Service, including Sanskrit and Tamil!¹³⁵ Newman coached in Classics and English literature for the

for six days. (Belloc-Lowdnes, *op. cit.*, p.73) On the criteria of prizes, the school was less Classical than Stonyhurst because there prizes were only awarded for Classics. (E.B. Barrett, *The Jesuit enigma*, London, 1928, p.172)

129. Newman to St John, 12 Jan 1864, *L&D XXI*, pp.15-16

130. Mohnen's research into the 498 boys who entered the school in Newman's lifetime reveals that, of the 170 who were traceable, 39 went to university. (Mohnen, *op.cit.*, p.140) Of these 26 went to Oxford and five to Cambridge. The Grissell Papers reveal that five others went to Oxford. (Ampleforth archives, JX24-1) At the time only a third of the boys at the seven major schools went to university. (Bamford, *The rise of the public schools*, p.47)

131. "Parents have a will of their own, and as we should be obliged to follow their decision, did they propose Woolwich for their sons or the London University, or the Catholic University of Ireland, or Louvain, so we should do our best to prepare any youths for Oxford and Cambridge did they wish it". (Newman to Ffoulkes, Mar 1862, quoted in Jackson, *op. cit.*, p.213)

132. This entailed an emphasis on mathematics: it was "the subject of study which certain parents have made a great point of". (Newman to R. Pope, 22 Oct 1862, *L&D XX*, p.320)

133. His remuneration of £200 was met by increased fees, £160 or £120, depending on whether the boys were over 16 or under. (Newman to Mrs Froude, 19 Apr 1863, *L&D XX*, p.433)

134. School prospectus, n.d. [1865/66], BOA. A post-1867 prospectus (BOA) stated that fees were raised to £100 p.a. for boys under 15 and £120 for boys above. A post-1879 prospectus (BOA) quoted just the higher fee.

135. Proposed alterations and additions to the school prospectus: about extra mathematics arrangements, extra tuition from R. Pope, and preparation for Woolwich, etc, BOA

London University Intermediate Examination in Arts, while St John coached in Hebrew.¹³⁶

The school had one early success at Woolwich and two at Oxford, but the latter two had left early and been coached at Grassmere by Darnell, who hoped to turn his tutoring establishment into a public school.¹³⁷ Newman discussed with St John whether they should make peace with Darnell and arrange for him to act as a private tutor for parents who insisted on sending their sons to Oxford; the aim being to keep such boys at school for at least another year.¹³⁸ Newman recognised that Darnell's tutorial establishment had the advantage of offering parents a less regimented environment than school, although it laboured under a disadvantage when it came to motivating boys.¹³⁹ The plan came to nothing. When Darnell's father died in June 1865, it was thought he might risk his large inheritance on his establishment.¹⁴⁰ Although this did not happen Newman later found himself competing with Darnell for masters.¹⁴¹ The pattern of boys leaving early, in order to prepare for Oxford entrance under a tutor, was changed when Newman persuaded Towneley to keep his son at school. Newman undertook the tutoring himself and "crammed Towneley nearly every day" of the 1865 Christmas vacation. Even when he was unable to say Mass and confined to bed, Newman stuck at the task. The result was a double success: Towneley was greatly praised by the examiners; and he was entered for Christ Church, rather than Balliol where his father had originally intended him to go.¹⁴²

136. Tristram, 'The Oratory School', Dec 1932, p.206 & 'Ambrose St John, 1815-75', *Oratory School Magazine* LXVIII, May 1925, p.5

137. Francis Ward was the school's first success at Woolwich. His brother Richard and Charles Thynne were the first successes at Oxford.

138. Newman to St John, 21 Apr 1865, *L&D* XXI, p.449

139. Newman to Darnell, 16 Oct 1865, *L&D* XXII, p.75

140. His father had had a fabulous living worth £5000 p.a.

141. Both competed for the services of Hopkins. (Newman to Hopkins, 22 & 28 Feb 1867, *L&D* XXIII, p.67 & p.70) Challis left the school in 1868 to tutor under Darnell.

142. The switch was important. There was "a good deal of lax, sceptical opinion" at Balliol which Newman warned against, whereas Christ Church could be recommended on two counts: it had the largest number of Catholics, and its size made it easier to choose one's company. (Newman to St John, 3 Aug 1865, p.21; Newman to St John, 14 Aug 1865, p.32; Newman's diary, 6 Jan 1866, p.126; Newman to Weguelin, 28 Apr 1866, p.226; Newman to Gaisford, 15 Nov 1866, p.317, all *L&D* XXII)

Mohnen's analysis of boys' destinations reveals that, of the 170 traced, 38 reached the rank of lieutenant-colonel or higher in the army, 22 became lawyers, 6 entered the diplomatic service and 11 occupied "leading positions in political life of their country".¹⁴³ Despite being a school for boys "whose duties are to lie in the world",¹⁴⁴ 23 became priests, two of whom became bishops.¹⁴⁵ The *School Record* for the years 1879–83 gives a similar breakdown.¹⁴⁶ The ranking of career destinations closely matches that of Rugby and Harrow, but not Stonyhurst.¹⁴⁷ Preference for the army was due to its popularity among Catholics and the large number of military converts.¹⁴⁸

The proportion going into the priesthood vindicated Newman's belief that a curriculum consisting mainly of secular studies would not deter those called to the ecclesiastical state.¹⁴⁹ His advice to boys who considered they had a priestly vocation was invariably to urge them to be patient and to avoid narrowing their options too early.¹⁵⁰ A year after leaving the school Stokes returned to the Oratory wanting to be

143. In the 1904 elections four old boys were returned as MPs. They were joined by Hilaire Belloc after the 1906 elections.

144. Draft school manifesto, n.d. [Nov 1858], BOA

145. Mohnen, *op.cit.*, pp.140–1

146. Over this five-year period, nine gained army or navy commissions, six were called to the Bar, six entered foreign administration (four in the Indian civil service), four were ordained priests, two had posts in Parliament and one each became a banker, an MP, a school inspector and a doctor. (*School Record, 1879–83*, BOA)

147. Bamford's analysis of these schools showed that the armed forces were the most popular destinations, followed by law, then administration. (Bamford, *The rise of the public schools*, pp.209–18) Of the 45 who left Stonyhurst each year, about 15–20 went into business and 8–9 into the priesthood. Many of the others joined the army or Indian civil service, or became engineers. (Taunton Report V, p.332)

148. In the second half of the nineteenth century about a third of the army were Catholics. (Gilley, 'The Roman Catholic Church in England, 1780–1940', ed. S. Gilley & W.J. Sheils, *A history of religion in Britain: practice and belief from pre-Roman times to the present*, Oxford, 1994, p.357) The destinations also reflected parental professions because, as Rubenstein has shown, choice of career was affected chiefly by family background. (W.D. Rubinstein, *Capitalism, culture and decline in Britain, 1750–1990*, London, 1993, p.119) The figures from Gorman's breakdown of converts by profession show 372 from the armed forces (306 army and 64 naval officers) and 192 from the legal profession (126 barristers and 66 solicitors). Gorman also lists 115 children or grandchildren of converts who served in the army. (*Op. cit.*, pp.xiii & 311–14)

149. One parent decided not to send a son who showed signs of a vocation to the priesthood, as he believed the school was "a general one, for all classes and vocations". Newman suspected he had been influenced by gossip. (Lindsay to Newman, 2 Jan 1869, pp.196–7n & Newman to St John, 5 Jan 1869, p.201, both *L&D XXIV*)

150. In vain did he try, in consultation with the Fathers, to dissuade Harry Wilberforce, who felt the pull of a priestly vocation, from transferring to Ushaw. He did not become a priest. (Newman to H. Wilberforce,

a priest. Newman was concerned that if he later changed his mind he would lose those years "for the purposes of any secular pursuit and have to begin life again." In accepting him at the Oratory, Newman offered to "take care to advance his education while he is with us, so that he will not have lost even for secular objects so important a portion of his youth".¹⁵¹

Care of body and soul

Neglect of the spiritual dimension of the school had prevented the Fathers from ministering to the boys' needs. Before being appointed, St John had already remarked on the "tremendous uphill work to get back [a] habit of prayer".¹⁵² Entries in St John's diary confirm the laxity of the previous regime and the efforts made to reform it.¹⁵³ After the crisis the timetable was properly enforced. On weekdays boys rose at 6.30 am and at 6.50 they said their prayers, either at their bedside or in church. At 7.00 they took part in joint prayers and attended Mass. At night the younger boys went to bed at 8.30 pm and at 8.50 there were joint prayers from *The garden of the soul*,¹⁵⁴ after which they

24 Sep 1863, *L&D* XX, p.528)

151. Newman to C.S. Stokes, 8 Feb 1864, *L&D* XXI, p.45. J.M. Stokes did not become a priest, but married and made his career in the Post Office.

Robert Froude was only 16 or 17 when Newman received him into the Catholic Church, on account of which he transferred from Bradfield College to the school. The boy set his mind on the priesthood. His father, who was not a Catholic, wanted Robert to prepare with a tutor for a degree in mathematics and natural science at Oxford in order to become an engineer like himself. Newman gently encouraged him to consider doing as his father wished. (Newman to Froude, 8 Aug 1864, *L&D* XXI, pp.188–9) The outcome was that the boy worked under his father in the Admiralty Experimental Works at Torquay and succeeded him as Superintendent, a post he held for 40 years. He wrote on naval architecture and other scientific subjects and became a Fellow of the Royal Society.

152. St John to Newman, 16 Jan 1862, BOA. He even considered beginning term with a day's retreat. (*Ibid.*, but deleted in the draft copy)

153. "Sat 1 Feb Opened school. Disorder before school in Schoolroom. Very bad attendance in Chapel. Not more than 28 boys.

Sun 23 Feb Some boys shirk the catechism.

Sun 2 Mar Bad attendance at Mass. 6 boys [given] impositions for being late.

Wed 5 Mar (Ash Wednesday) All noise and confusion in school [...] At evening prayers spoke to the boys about their devotions — only 5 boys at Rosary.

Sun 9 Mar Many boys late at Mass. Mass Prefect didn't do his duty. The Father [Newman] preached to the boys on inattention in church. [...] Some boys behaved badly at night prayers."

(St John's diary, 1862, BOA)

154. This was the spiritual classic written by Richard Challoner, Vicar Apostolic of the Midland area in the eighteenth century. Those who held back from the new literature and devotions encouraged by the Ultramontanes were sometimes called 'Garden of the soul' Catholics.

remained on their knees for a few minutes for private prayers. The older boys followed this routine an hour later.¹⁵⁵ In Holy Week the boys participated in a three-day retreat. The *horarium* bore close resemblance to those in use at the Catholic colleges.¹⁵⁶ By contrast there was nothing similar at the ancient public schools, not even for those intended for the Church.¹⁵⁷

Foremost among the duties of the two spiritual directors was hearing the boys' Confessions. As part of the general tightening up, Newman asked the confessors to give him a monthly return of the boys going.¹⁵⁸ The sacrament was an integral part of school life. In 1865 a boy stole a large sum of money from another boy's desk: it was the second theft since the school began. The boys knew of it and, as the money was still missing after three weeks, the Fathers took action. It was considered "a matter of humiliation for the whole School". With the day for monthly Confession approaching, it was announced that the whole school should go with the theft "especially before them", and that nothing would be done if, after the Confessions, the money was returned. All went and the money reappeared. The culprit's identity remained a secret. "The boys took it in the best spirit, and the whole School with Fr Ambrose said some Hail Marys for the penitent."¹⁵⁹ The comments of a master, who had previously been at Eton, to another Eton master "were full of the difference between Catholic schools and those of which he had experience, and he was greatly struck by the simple faith of the lads". He was particularly impressed by the manliness of the Edgbaston boys and the fervent piety of many, the combination not having been frequent in his previous experience. The bearing of the Sacrament of Penance, not only on the individual soul, but on the discipline

155. *Horarium* for the Oratory School boys, n.d., BOA, A.14.9. In 1862 the timetable was: 8.45 evening prayers, 9.00–9.10 private prayer in bedrooms, 9.10 prefects read the *De profundis*, 9.30 lights out. (St John's diary, 10 Feb 1862, BOA)

156. At Sedgley Park boys rose at 6pm, went to prayers before Mass at 7.30am and had night prayers at 8pm, using books like *The garden of the soul*. (F. Roberts, *op.cit.*, p.93) The same arrangement was in place at Stonyhurst where, like the Oratory School, there was a visit to the Blessed Sacrament and the Rosary in the evening. Stonyhurst and Oscott had three-day retreats too. (Gruggan & Keating, *op.cit.*, pp.223–4 & Moody's diary, 11 Apr 1862, BOA)

157. The atmosphere at Eton was one of "pleasant heathenism". (Chandos, *op.cit.*, p.270) However, at the new foundations inspired by the Oxford Movement there were safeguards against "woolly doctrine and slack religious discipline". (Heeney, *op. cit.*, p.60)

158. Newman to Bittleston, 11 Mar 1862, *L&D* XX, p.167

159. Newman to Bellasis, 26 Nov 1865, *L&D* XXII, pp.111–12

and purity of school life, came to him like a revelation.¹⁶⁰

Arrangements after the crisis show that religious instruction was transformed: boys were made to learn their prayers and catechism thoroughly; there were instructions and sermons for the whole school; and scripture was studied in English, Latin and Greek.¹⁶¹ In the period 1865–77 Newman gave catechetical lectures to sixth formers.¹⁶² From the outset Newman held "that a handsome church is a necessity for the proper establishment of a boys' school",¹⁶³ for "children and boys take in religion principally through the eye".¹⁶⁴ It was to be "one main instrument of religious and moral training".¹⁶⁵ The financial sacrifice entailed in adapting the Oratory church and a separate chapel was

160. Walford was convinced that "for boyish needs and for boyish sins confession and frequent communion were the only safeguard and cure". A major reason for his conversion was the feeling that the way in which the sacrament of Penance was administered within the Anglican communion was inadequate. (C.K. Paul, *Memories*, London, 1899, pp.235 & 238) Woodard argued in a similar vein, that regular spiritual direction and the availability of Confession were essential for avoiding the dangers public-school boys were exposed to, and, in particular, helping them in the virtue of chastity. (Heeney, *op.cit.*, pp.63–4) Chandos has observed that, in the period 1800–64, the public schools were incapable of providing teaching on sexual matters. (*Op. cit.*, pp.287–8)

161. St John gave a full description of arrangements in October 1862 to enable Bellasis to refute the criticisms of the Bishop of Shrewsbury. All boys were tested on their catechism once a week by the headmaster. At first this was carried out over two days, during lesson time, with St John moving from class to class. Later the system changed and the boys went in pairs, beginning with the youngest, to St John's room where they tested each other in his presence: this involved learning the questions as well as the answers. The younger boys spent 15 minutes each day on their catechism. Once a week they went to St John's room, both for catechism and so that he could hear them say their prayers correctly. Every Sunday, before High Mass, the boys were required in school for 15 minutes of "catechetical instruction". (St John thought these "short simple sermons" of Newman were so good they should be published. (*L&D XX*, p.249n) Nash has suggested that *Meditations and devotions of the late Cardinal Newman* (ed. H. Tristram, London, 1893; 1953) contains some of Newman's lectures, meditations and prayers for the school. (Nash, *op.cit.*, pp.16–17)) For the duration of the homily in High Mass, boys were tested in pairs by Newman and then all given "a practical instruction", before returning to the church for the Creed. Once a week St John took the fifth form and upper fourth, separately, for Greek Testament and its history. Lower forms which were sufficiently capable, had a weekly lesson on the Latin Vulgate; at first using an 'Epitome', later a Vulgate Testament. On a less regular basis Arnold taught his classes the Gospels in English. (St John's memorandum on the religious instruction at the Oratory School, Oct 1862, BOA) Further confirmation of the importance given to Catechism is that St John and Newman discussed the idea of a prize for it. (Newman to St John, 23 Oct 1862, *L&D XX*, p.321)

162. The essays the boys were required to write were carefully marked and annotated by Newman. Several sets of boys' notes survive at the Oratory archives (A.42.12, B.11.7 & B.12.4) from which his lectures could be reconstructed, but such a task lies beyond this thesis.

163. Newman's memorandum, 5 Feb 1861, *L&D XIX*, p.463

164. Newman to Bellasis, 13 Apr 1858, *L&D XVIII*, p.319

165. Newman to Bellasis, 23 Apr 1858, *L&D XVIII*, p.332

considerable — £3530 before the crisis — but parents happily acquiesced.¹⁶⁶ As at Dublin, it showed Newman's "noble proclamation of priorities".¹⁶⁷

The risk of boys contracting contagious diseases or illnesses was a constant worry, as at all boarding schools. In 1862 an epidemic of scarlet fever hit Birmingham. An infirmary was immediately set up far from the school buildings in case there was such an outbreak, or one of measles or whooping cough, and a nurse was sought.¹⁶⁸ Oscott was hit badly: the boys were sent home and one died. Sedgley Park closed for two months in 1872 because of typhoid: two boys died.¹⁶⁹ Newman attributed the Oratory School's success in escaping a serious epidemic to the "great care of the Matrons". The utmost vigilance was exercised in dealing with boys who showed symptoms of illness. Parents were asked not to return their sons from holidays unless they were in good health. Rumours of illnesses in families were investigated, delicately but firmly.¹⁷⁰ Fears of individual parents were assuaged individually, but at times it became necessary to send out circular letters.¹⁷¹ The prospectus declared that the school used the best medical advice available, including homoeopathic medicine if requested, and that special attention was to be paid to the diet, health and comfort of the boys.¹⁷² Parents were requested to have all jams and sweetmeats handed in, as medical advice warned of "the evil of such miscellaneous eating upon the health of the boys", if for no other reason than that of

166. At first Ward understood that the alterations would not include a private chapel for the school. He argued that it was too important to omit, and worth making a considerable sacrifice for. As all the existing schools had private chapels, he pleaded, how could they do without one? (F.R. Ward to Bellasis, n.d., BOA) St Philip's Chapel is described in Tristram, *Cardinal Newman and the Church of the Birmingham Oratory: a history and a guide*, Gloucester, 1962.

167. Newsome, *The convert cardinals*, p.218. At Dublin, the University Church was built using Newman's own funds. Pollen was the architect in both cases.

168. Newman to Hope-Scott, 8 Feb 1862, *L&D XX*, p.407

169. F. Roberts, *op. cit.*, p.108

170. The Sheils were asked about scarlet fever and the Charltons about small-pox. (Newman to Sheil, 18 Jan 1863, *L&D XX*, p.316 & Newman to Mrs Charlton, 7 Sep 1863, *L&D XX*, p.521)

171. One announced that Arnold had scarlet fever and that he had been separated from school before it had fully developed. (Draft circular letter to parents, 29 Dec 1863, *L&D XX*, p.570n) Another informed parents that the Gaisford boy had come from home with scarlet fever, had been sent home at once, and that sufficient time had elapsed as quarantine for parents to receive their sons home at Easter without risk of infection. (Circular letter to parents, Mar 1864, *L&D XXI*, p.89n)

172. School prospectus, n.d. [spring 1862], BOA

taking away their appetite for meals.¹⁷³

Partnership with parents

Newman believed that a school's task was to cooperate with parents in their responsibility to care for and educate their offspring. This underlying conviction was not explicitly stated in school documents but it manifested itself in practice by shaping the Oratory School's attitude to boys and their parents. It surfaced frequently in Newman's correspondence.¹⁷⁴ When Bellasis told Newman that the school had been a great success for his sons, Newman replied that it could only take a "due portion of credit [...] seeing the patterns and guidance they have at home".¹⁷⁵ In other words, school had to rely and build on the education received at home. By contrast, Woodard had little sympathy for the conception of education as a partnership between parents and schools.¹⁷⁶

Among the addresses to Newman and his replies to mark his cardinalate was one from mothers of schoolboys, past and present, who thanked him "as parents for the character and tone with which your personal influence has invested the Oratory School". To former pupils, Newman declared that the care of schoolboys was "a pastoral charge of the most intimate kind". Parents had made a great sacrifice and "an act of supreme confidence" in committing their sons to boarding school. The "sense of the great trust" made the school anxious to respond faithfully to its duties. "No other department of the pastoral office requires such sustained attention and such unwearied services", because those with pastoral responsibilities lived with their pupils, saw them grow up, and "are ever tenderly watching over them, that their growth may be in the right direction".¹⁷⁷

173. Circular to the parents of boys at the Oratory School, 27 Mar 1865, *L&D* XXI, p.439

174. There are many expressions in Newman's correspondence like the following: "It is a tremendous thing to be intrusted with the hopes and loves of so many Mamas." (Newman to Bloxam, 24 Oct 1863, *L&D* XX, p.542)

175. Bellasis to Newman, 30 Aug 1865 & Newman to Bellasis, 4 Sep 1865, *L&D* XXII, p.42

176. He aimed to substitute the degradation of family life with the moral and religious atmosphere of school. Therefore, unlike Newman, he brooked no interference in school affairs by parents or others. He was convinced of the need to remove middle-class children from the "noxious influence of home". (Honey, *op.cit.*, pp.54-5)

177. Addresses 'From the mothers of the Oratory School Boys' & 'To the members of the Oratory School Society', 20 Jul 1879, Newman, *Addresses to Cardinal Newman with his replies*, ed. W.P. Neville, London, 1905, pp.121-2 & 124

Communication was essential for Newman's idea of partnership with parents to work. He laid great stress on being in Birmingham at the start of term in order to meet those who brought their sons.¹⁷⁸ Reacting to complaints of lack of information from Darnell,¹⁷⁹ Newman acknowledged that "one deficiency has been that we have not let parents know enough how their sons were going on. This I hope will be henceforth set right."¹⁸⁰ He obliged by sending reports to parents twice a year.¹⁸¹ These individual letters written by Newman summarised progress, achievements and other developments, and were based on information supplied by the staff. Newman only considered himself excused from the task if he met parents at the end of term, or if St John called on the family in the holidays.

Newman took on himself the burden of dealing with parental demands. They usually concerned petty school matters and kept Newman busy, in term and out.¹⁸² Newman was aware that parents could expect too much of a school and, at times, wondered if the schoolmaster had a more onerous task than that of a banker.¹⁸³

Bankers had all the responsibility of all pursuits and traders upon them, for, whenever any one was in pecuniary difficulty, he went to his Banker. And so a schoolmaster has the anxieties of all the parents of his boys — and more so — for parents would not blame themselves, if their children fell ill at home — but they are naturally disposed to think that school-carefulness [...] might be greater than it is.

To illustrate his point he noted that the school had been obliged to re-paper and wash all

178. Newman to St John, 9 & 13 Aug 1862, *L&D XX*, pp.255 & 259

179. Bellasis to Newman, 9 Jan 1862 & Hibbert to Newman, 11 Jan 1862, BOA. Four letters from Darnell to the Duchess of Norfolk survive which show how Darnell made the effort in this case. They recount the Duke's difficulties of rising in the morning and report on academic progress, as well as dealing with a change of dame's house and end-of-term travelling arrangements. (24 Sep, 15 & 26 Nov, 16 Dec 1861, Arundel Castle archives, C.581)

180. Newman to Allies, 26 Jan 1862, *L&D XX*, p.135

181. Newman to Mrs Allies, 18 Jan 1864, *L&D XXI*, p.21

182. A few examples suffice to indicate their range. One concerned a boy's backwardness in English, particularly spelling, and asked if his master could help him by dictation and other means. (Mostyn to Newman, 26 Jan 1862, BOA) Requests were made for sons to be put in separate bedrooms to help them get on better with each other and other boys. (Fitzgerald to Newman, 20 Jan 1862 & Palmer to Newman, 20 Jan 1862, BOA) The young Duke of Norfolk required riding lessons, and arrangements had to be made for horses, instructors, transport and an escort. (Newman to Hope-Scott, 2 Feb 1862, p.147 & Newman to the Duchess of Norfolk, 3 Mar 1862, pp.161-2, both *L&D XX*)

183. Newman had a keen appreciation of a banker's concerns, as his father had been one until the financial crisis at the end of the Napoleonic wars.

the bedrooms in one house merely because a boy, who had left school well, became ill at home.¹⁸⁴

Newman complained to Sheil that he could not be expected to provide a written reply to all parental requests. Sheil had asked for his son to have extra lessons in 'penmanship' from the writing master. Implementation of the request had been delayed and Newman asked Sheil to be "more merciful in future", for "if you knew enough about the conduct of a School, you would understand that the directions of 60 or 70 parents cannot be carried out at once [...] as a footman answers his master's bell!"¹⁸⁵ The state of affairs was, to Newman's thinking, worse at Oscott, where the President was "assailed [...] by the parents of a hundred lay boys" who paid low fees, yet expected first-class teachers, while his first duty and that of the bishop was to the 20 church boys.¹⁸⁶

Newman was wary of assuming responsibilities which naturally belonged to parents.¹⁸⁷ In the school's interests, and therefore the boys', Newman reciprocated with his own demands. He laid down rules about vacations, but it was problematic as parents had such varied preferences. Some, like Sheil, thought that three weeks at Christmas were sufficient as, by the end, the boys were tired of home and ready for school.¹⁸⁸ Other parents preferred to have their sons home longer. Gaisford thought his sons would benefit from a few more days hunting at Christmas!¹⁸⁹ By design, vacation arrangements conformed to the public-school pattern, in marked contrast to the Catholic colleges.¹⁹⁰

184. Newman to Mrs Mozley, 2 Jan 1864, *L&D* XXI, pp.3-4

185. Newman to Sheil, 2 Mar 1865, *L&D* XXI, pp.426-7

186. Newman's memorandum, 4 May 1865, *L&D* XXI, p.457n

187. A parent asked the school to assist in organising a collection from British youth to mark the 25th anniversary of Pius IX. Newman thought it should "be done at home by parents, not by schoolmasters". (Newman to Poole, 7 Nov 1870, *L&D* XXV, pp.225-6)

188. The argument applied specially to the seven weeks in the summer. (Sheil to Newman, 20 Jan 1862, BOA)

189. Gaisford to Newman, 11 Jan 1862, BOA

190. In 1858 Scott-Murray had urged that there should be two or more vacations a year, as in the Protestant schools. He reckoned that the Catholic system was backward in this respect, as did his father-in-law, Lord Lovat, who insisted on having his sons home for Christmas, though this meant getting them behind in their studies. (Scott-Murray to Newman, 5 Jul 1858, BOA) Although there were 14 weeks of vacation at Stonyhurst, boys only went home once a year, for six weeks in summer. The main reason the authorities gave for the arrangement was the difficulty in getting boys back to school after vacations. (Taunton Report V, pp.332-4) This was partly due to Stonyhurst being 14 miles from Preston railway station.

Newman's first attempt to minimise the disruption caused by boys going home at Easter was based on a survey carried out by Bellasis. The rules stated that boys could leave no earlier than Tuesday of Holy Week and return no later than Low Monday. Some took Holy Week, others Easter Week; some took two weeks and others had no break. Such an arrangement, involving "the care of boys when idleness is almost the rule", meant more work than term-time.¹⁹¹ In 1865 the optional Easter holiday was reduced to the nine days between Holy Saturday and Low Monday. Parents were reminded: "In the old public schools boys are punished who are unpunctual without leave from the authorities."¹⁹² The younger boys were all expected to write home once a week. Mrs Wootten supervised the operation until a parent complained. Thereafter it became a school matter, and all boys were given an hour a week, in school time, for the purpose.¹⁹³ Although Newman realised that the privilege was abused, he preferred to trust, rather than check, that the boys complied.¹⁹⁴

Knowing the boys, one by one

The detail and incisiveness of Newman's termly letters to parents reflected his emphasis on concern for the individual. His mind instinctively recoiled from systems requiring identical treatment of people.¹⁹⁵ The significant investment in pastoral care after the crisis cannot be attributed solely to the school's struggle for survival, although Newman did recognise the advantage of the school being on trial as a stimulation, for he reckoned: "A long-established school grows callous".¹⁹⁶ The tone Newman set by his example was

191. Newman to Bellasis, 3 Apr 1862, *L&D* XX, p.181

192. The circular letter pointed out that fewer than six boys had returned on time after the previous Christmas holiday. The new days of return were proclaimed as the Tuesday after 20th January and the Tuesday after 10th September. (Circular to the parents of boys at the school, 27 Mar 1865, *L&D* XXI, pp.438-9)

193. Newman to Acton, 8 Jul 1862, *L&D* XX, p.223. Mrs Wootten remarked that Lord Edmund Howard was not unusual in writing home daily. (Mrs Wootten to the Duchess of Norfolk, 17 May [between 1865 and 1872], Arundel Castle archives, C.581)

194. J. Jackson, *op. cit.*, p.206

195. J.L. May, *Cardinal Newman: a study*, London, 1929, p.92

196. Newman to Bloxam, 24 Oct 1862, *L&D* XX, 542

simply a manifestation of his lifelong insistence on the pastoral role of the educator.¹⁹⁷

Newman's reports pulled together observations and opinions from the whole staff to provide a balanced overview. The depth of analysis and the insights in these letters leads to just one conclusion: Newman had a gift for judging boys and a keen understanding of the genus 'boy'. Some of these characteristics are brought out in Newman's first report on Cyril Allies, a difficult boy. All boys are wayward, he told the father, but in Cyril there was a lack of *πὸν στῶ* ('basis to work from') that made it difficult to stimulate him. As with most boys "Religious principle or duty" did not act energetically enough to motivate him. Attempts to encourage him to sit the Woolwich exam had failed because he had dropped out of the special mathematics class. An example of his shortcomings was supplied — a sum he had been given and his solution. Cyril had been excused Greek to do more mathematics, "but how can he do algebra unless he can work figures correctly?" His lack of grounding in various subjects made progress difficult. "His heart is not in his work, and his influence in the school is not good".¹⁹⁸

A theme Newman repeatedly emphasised to parents was the need for patience with their sons. He calmed their eagerness for quick gains: the phases of growing up had to be respected and irritating passing habits overlooked. Boys could not be forced like plants; each would bear flower and fruit in his own season.¹⁹⁹ Newman showed considerable understanding and patience for the fitful process of adolescent maturation.²⁰⁰ Lack of

197. Newman's emphasis on the pastoral role of a tutor is described in Ker, *Newman: a biography*, pp.27-29, 32, 37-42 & 412 and Newman, *My campaign in Ireland*, pp.117-20.

198. Newman to Allies, 15 Apr 1862, *L&D XX*, pp.186-7. Cyril was withdrawn from the school in the summer of 1862 because there was no marked improvement.

199. Newman to Colyar, 27 Sep 1862, *L&D XX*, p.278

200. His approach is conveyed in his comments on the Duke of Norfolk: "He has fits of negligence when every thing goes wrong, and then we are perplexed with the number of impositions which fall upon him from every quarter — and we have to release him from the weight of them, as best we may. There are boys who do him harm by encouraging him to make game of these magisterial corrections — and he sometimes comes up for the imposition, as if it were good fun. (Pray, do not hint this to him.) He will become more manly in a little time. I think on the whole he is better in getting up — but here too he has fits of dawdling. In spite of all this, he is exact and methodical in his habits — and it is amusing to see how well he keeps his books and clothes. [...] As to ourselves, the only fear is that, from extreme anxiety about him, we should meddle with him too much, and make too much of little things." (Newman to the Duchess of Norfolk, 16 Apr 1862, *L&D XX*, pp.187-8)

patience arose "out of anxiety" and not having "confidence enough in God's mercy".²⁰¹ Newman was keenly aware that lack of success at school was no indicator against future success,²⁰² yet the purpose of education was "to prepare for the world".²⁰³ It was vital to cater for the individual as far as possible. The school was for the boys, not *vice versa*: studies were tailored to suit individual needs;²⁰⁴ rules were waived for good reasons;²⁰⁵ expectations varied according to the individual — more was expected of Bellasis's sons as Newman felt they should turn out "as patterns of Oratory education".²⁰⁶

Newman was not satisfied with an acquaintance with the boys. He aimed to know them well and make their "personal friendship".²⁰⁷ The monthly repetitions enabled him to monitor the boys' academic progress. The introduction of termly 'characters' had a broader sweep. After the end-of-term exams boys went individually to receive their characters. St John read out an account of the boy's progress and behaviour, then Newman gave "a few words of encouragement, approval, or remonstrance".²⁰⁸ Newman attached great importance to this termly engagement and gave it priority over other business, refusing to depute the task to others.²⁰⁹ In 1890 he was still conducting the personal interviews of school leavers.²¹⁰ A clue to his ability to relate to boys comes

201. "We ought in the first place to put him into the hands of Divine Love — and then do our part carefully and calmly." (Newman to the Duchess of Norfolk, 30 Dec 1863, *L&D* XX, p.572)

202. "Boys at school look like each other, and pursue the same studies, some of them with greater success than others; but it will sometimes happen, that those who acquitted themselves but poorly in class, when they come into the action of life, and engage in some particular work, which they have already been learning in its theory and with little promise of proficiency, are suddenly found to have what is called an eye for that work — an eye for trade matters, or for engineering, or a special taste for literature — which no one expected from them at school, while they were engaged on notions." (Newman, *Grammar of assent*, pp.75–6)

203. *Idea of a university*, p.232

204. "Without putting the school out", Newman wanted to accept Freeman to study French and German. (Newman to St John, 24 Oct 1862, *L&D* XX, p.324)

205. Thynne was allowed to accompany his father to the Exhibition of Science at Kensington. (Newman to Neville, 6 Oct 1862, *L&D* XX, p.289)

206. Newman to Bellasis, 30 Dec 1863, *L&D* XX, p.571

207. Newman to Hardman, 29 Jan 1862, *L&D* XX, p.141

208. [E. Howard], 'Reminiscences of an old boy', *Oratory School Magazine* XCVIII, Jul 1940, pp.1–2. The custom was introduced in 1862. (St John's diary, 14 Apr 1862, BOA)

209. Newman to Northcote, 17 Jul 1867, *L&D* XXIII, pp.269–70

210. Neville to Mrs Mozley, 9 Aug 1890, *L&D* XXXI, p.298n

from Oscar Browning,²¹¹ the well-known reformer at Eton and King's College, Cambridge. He visited the Oratory and was "struck with Newman's marvellous copiousness of language and abundant fluency, also with his use of harmless worldly slang, that he might not appear priggish or monkish".²¹²

Browning placed great emphasis on trust in boys and on being on intimate terms with them.²¹³ His approach reflected (and inspired) a gradual change at the time towards a better master-pupil relationship and less reliance on corporal punishment.²¹⁴ Newman was also influential in this change of attitude. He had ridiculed "the reign of Law without influence, System without Personality", and had remarked: "An academical system without the personal influence of teachers upon pupils, is an arctic winter."²¹⁵ By contrast, Newman described how at Oxford those who united rule and influence "gained the hearts and became the guides of the youthful generation".²¹⁶ There remain only fragments of evidence confirming that the Oratory School masters exercised this personal influence which, by its very nature, was indirect.²¹⁷ Marshall comments on the

211. Oscar Browning (1837–1923) was educated at Eton and King's College, Cambridge. He became a fellow at King's, then a master at Eton where he was a popular and influential housemaster. Dismissed in 1875, Browning returned to King's, lectured in history, and began reforming and reorganising the college. He helped to found the Cambridge University Day-Training College for Teachers, and was its principal.

212. Browning visited the Oratory on 24th September 1866 and stayed overnight. (Browning, *Memories of sixty years at Eton, Cambridge and elsewhere*, London, 1919, p.269)

213. He opposed the "crushing surveillance" and excess of order that had changed Eton during his time. (E.C. Mack, *Public schools and British opinion since 1860: the relationship between contemporary ideas and the evolution of an English institution*, New York, 1941, pp.165–6) He continued what Johnson introduced, a cult of friendship between master and boy, while he taught at Eton. (Hollis, *op. cit.*, p.272)

214. Mack, *op. cit.*, pp.41 & 117

215. He described this regime with devastating effect. "I have experienced a state of things, in which teachers were cut off from the taught as by an unsurmountable barrier; when neither party entered into the thoughts of the other; when each lived by and in itself; when the tutor was supposed to fulfil his duty, if he trotted on like a squirrel in his cage, if at a certain hour he was in a certain room, or in hall, or in chapel, as it might be; and the pupil did his duty too, if he was careful to meet his tutor in that same room, or hall, or chapel, at the same certain hour; and when neither the one nor the other dreamed of seeing each other out of lecture, out of chapel, out of academical gown. I have known places where a stiff manner, a pompous voice, coldness and condescension, were the teacher's attributes, and where he neither knew, nor wished to know, and avowed he did not wish to know, the private irregularities of the youths committed to his charge." (*Historical sketches* III, pp.74–5)

216. *Ibid.*, p.76. It has been claimed that the leading Tractarian Sewell was also very influential in inspiring an entirely new relation between masters and boys. (James, *op. cit.*, p.139)

217. One such was a letter home from Belloc. He wrote: "a new master came the other day and he understands me, he opened the way and though the battle is there, it is possible to fight it and a great weight is off my heart. Why I hated everything was because no-one had broken the ice for me, now it is all right.

"openhearted affectionate standing of the masters with the boys";²¹⁸ La Serre describes himself as "easy and playful" in the playground, but "pretty stiff in study time";²¹⁹ Hopkins felt "as if they [the boys] were all my children".²²⁰

The role of tutor, as distinct from master, merits attention, but its nature at the Oratory School can only be ascertained indirectly, such as through Newman's commentary on the distinction between college and university. The conventional division of labour at the ancient universities concerned teaching methods — professorial at the university, tutorial at the college — and determined purpose — the pursuit of knowledge at university, the formation of character at the college. The division was recognised at the public schools in the distinction between teaching and pastoral duties.²²¹ However, Newman went a step further. For him, the college, or hall of residence, stretched the 'strict idea' of a university — what was sufficient for its essence or being — into 'well-being' — an integral whole: a flawed reality was raised up to a new level through the addition of certain perfections lacking in the original.²²²

There were close similarities of this complementarity at the Oratory School. The masters provided the essential element, the teaching, while the tutors, dames and spiritual directors provided that personal influence necessary for the school's integrity or well-being — because "Personal influence requires personal acquaintance."²²³ Presumably, just as "the office of a Catholic university is to teach *faith*, and of Colleges to protect *morals*,"²²⁴ so masters and Fathers concentrated on giving religious *instruction*, while tutors, dames and spiritual directors focused on religious *training*. Unfortunately, there

I am in a truer, happier state of things than I ever was before." (Belloc-Lowdnes, *op. cit.*, p.73)

218. Brownlow, *op.cit.*, pp.6–7

219. La Serre, *Memoirs*, p.16, Arundel Castle archives, MD.2119

220. Hopkins to E.H. Coleridge, 26 Oct 1867, *Further letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, p.45

221. The system of tutors at Harrow is described in the Clarendon Report IV, pp.172–6. All boys had a tutor who would look after the well-being of his pupils. If a boy was not doing well, his tutor would speak to the housemaster, the form-master, the headmaster, the boy's parents or his friends. Unlike a master, he acted *in loco parentis*, while his "moral charge of the boy" lasted for the duration of his stay in the school.

222. S. Rothblatt, 'An Oxonian "idea" of a university: J.H. Newman and "well-being"', *The history of the University of Oxford* VI, p.293

223. Newman, *My campaign in Ireland*, pp.38–9

224. Newman to Dalgairns, 23 Jul 1852, *L&D* XV, p.134

is no record of the tutor's duties and how they dovetailed in with those of spiritual director and dame. Only the dame's role is transparent. Nevertheless, several principles emerge from Newman's conception of the tutor's role in the collegiate houses of the Catholic University. The pastoral function was more easily undertaken when relieved of the disciplinary element; it required "a sustained solicitude, and a mind devoted to his charge"; and it needed flexibility to adjust to the needs of each, depending on whether they were academically promising, weak or simply idle.²²⁵ Newman probably wished the boarding houses to be like collegiate houses, or halls; "a household" which "requires or involves the same virtuous and paternal discipline which is proper to a family and home".²²⁶ Ideally Newman wanted "a system of private tuition" at the Oratory School. It had been "long talked of", but was decided against as the cost was prohibitive.²²⁷ In theory, if not in practice, the full Oxbridge tutorial system nurtured intellectual and moral growth: it had been an essential ingredient in Newman's establishment of the Catholic University.²²⁸ Due to its expense, it could only be employed in schools like Eton or Harrow.²²⁹

Policy on admissions

School policy on admissions changed after the crisis. Eager to boost numbers and without a proper appreciation of Newman's conception of a school, Darnell had no special reason to be cautious about who to accept. Newman regretted the effects of this conventional

225. Newman, *My campaign in Ireland*, pp.117–20

226. Newman, *Historical sketches* III, pp.214–15. In Dublin, Newman planned for up to 20 youths being lodged together under a presiding dean, one or two lecturers, and a tutor. Culler claims that the arrangement was the outcome of Newman's earlier experiments and discussion in the 1830s. (Culler, *op. cit.*, pp.164–5)

227. Newman to Simeon, 22 Aug 1864, *L&D* XXI, p.205. Newman told a friend the plan was "if possible, to combine the advantages of a large school with those of private tuition", wryly noting that this was what "the English public schools intend, I suppose, though they do not carry it out in practice". (Newman to Lewis, 26 Aug 1860, *L&D* XIX, p.398)

228. Newman wanted the four tutors to be "the basis of the whole real system". They were to form the "real working team" of the university. (Culler, *op. cit.*, pp.163 & 167)

229. The system at Harrow had been imported from Eton at about the turn of the eighteenth century. The Harrow tutors declared they were equally concerned with intellectual progress and moral training. Boys in the sixth form read Classical texts with their tutor for two hours a week, and were set reading by him; fifth formers had one hour's reading plus correction of a composition. (This was independent of form work.) Monthly reports were sent by the tutor to the housemaster, who added comments about behaviour in the house, then on to parents. The system worked best where house-master and Classical tutor were one and the same. (Clarendon Report IV, pp.172–6)

policy. Individuals had arrived whose negative influence could have been anticipated. An influx of older boys, unaccustomed "to our particular rules and ways", had a detrimental effect on discipline.²³⁰ Newman's policy was more rigorous because his sights were set on a more ambitious goal. As his priority was to promote and protect the healthy growth of the nascent school, he tried to ensure that new boys were capable of being grafted onto the school body.

Newman had not thought out a policy on admissions before the crisis. He had envisaged the school growing naturally as word spread: interested parties would apply as a result of acquaintance with parents or friends of the school, thereby supplying some guarantee of suitability. But how was this to be adapted to those outside this extended school network? Newman asked Allies, "What is done at Eton or Harrow in the way of *introduction* of the parents of boys, candidates for admission, to the Head Master? Does he admit the son of any one who presents himself? At Oxford, a father applies to the Head of House *through some common friend*."²³¹ Newman had frequent recourse to Allies, Bellasis and Hope-Scott as he gradually formulated a policy.

Guarantee of character was required for admission. Moreover, the older the boy the greater the need for the assurance.²³² Applications were not only vetted on grounds of character but on suitability. Those requiring a commercial education,²³³ or who were unlikely to fit in, were turned away.²³⁴ The recommended age for entry was eight or

230. Newman to Darnell, 29 Aug 1861, *L&D* XX, p.39

231. The first case Newman was confronted with was not straightforward. Cornelia Freeman enquired about sending Francis Farquharson to the school. Besides being a stranger, the lady was not the boy's mother. Unsure how to proceed, Newman consulted Allies. (Newman to Allies, 10 Feb 1862, *L&D* XX, p.151) Newman drafted a reply asking: if he was to have a letter from the mother; about the school the boy had previously been at; and if she could vouch for his character. Bellasis was asked for his opinion. (Newman to Bellasis, 5 Mar 1862, *L&D* XX, p.162)

232. Newman was only willing to take back the 15-year-old Prince Beccadelli on condition that he was 'on trial' for a term. (Newman to Acton, 13 Mar 1867, *L&D* XXIII, p.79)

233. Newman was hesitant to accept one 16-year-old boy because it was suspected he needed "a merely commercial education". (Newman to Neville, 1 Dec 1865, *L&D* XXII, p.115)

234. Newman was sensitive to the difficulties involved when accepting boys who were of a different background from the others. Against his inclination, the Congregation decided to accept a boy on trial for three weeks out of term. The boy was a protégé of Miss Bathurst, a nun working in London, who thought the boy might have a vocation. Newman was afraid the boy might "get to be looked down upon", knowing that "boys let out all about their parents, rank in life, associates etc". His short stay proved that he would do so and therefore he was not admitted. Besides, he did not seem the "cut of a boy, who has, or will have,

nine, provided a boy could read and spell English adequately. Apart from the barrier of fees and social adaptability, there was no restriction on grounds of class. One enquirer was told "to be under no apprehension about the class of boys who come to us. All boys need teaching and training, and any boy is respected and makes his way who is diligent, obedient, and manly and amiable to his companions."²³⁵ Applications for concessions in fees were dealt with by the Congregation, as before the crisis. The Fathers were severely restricted in their options on two counts. There were many equally deserving cases, such as sons of convert clergymen,²³⁶ and the school was losing money, even on its operating costs. Scholarships were therefore beyond the school's resources. Nevertheless reductions and free places were given on an *ad hominem* basis.²³⁷ Fees were also reduced for those with more than one son at the school.²³⁸

The admission of foreign boys was problematic for two reasons: the difficulties in obtaining references; and risk of a negative effect on the school.²³⁹ Hope-Scott gave his opinion: foreign boys over a certain age should not be taken; a letter of introduction from a reliable person should be obtained; the fees should remain the same, but be insisted on in advance.²⁴⁰ These precautions were adopted, and boys over 14 were only taken

a vocation". (Newman to Miss Bathurst, 6 & 24 Jan 1864, *L&D* XXI, pp.7 & 27) For more about the mixing of boys at school, see Chandos, *op. cit.*, pp.75–6.

235. Newman to Mrs Sparrow, 25 Aug 1863, *L&D* XX, p.511

236. According to Gorman, nearly 600 of the converts were clergymen of the Church of England. (*Op. cit.*, p.xiii)

237. A free place for a year was given to the son of T.W. Marshall. He had intended to send his son before being dismissed from his post as a Government inspector of Catholic schools. He was one of the 32 prominent Catholics who had signed the petition to Newman to begin the school. Allies was consulted: he thought the offer was appropriate. (Newman to Allies, 14 Dec 1860, *L&D* XIX, p.439) Reduced fees of £50 p.a. were offered to Barff, the son of a convert clergyman who had a precarious business as a church artist. (Newman to Ornsby, 9 Nov 1863, *L&D* XX, pp.556–7) Harper, another convert clergyman, had his son accepted at £35 p.a. (*L&D* XXII, p.115n) Morell's three sons were also accepted at greatly reduced fees. He had become a Catholic in 1864, the year he became a school inspector. He was dismissed in circumstances which, like Marshall's, indicated anti-Catholic prejudice. (*L&D* XX, p.603)

238. School prospectus, n.d. [1867/68], BOA

239. One prospective parent complained of the harm done when Spanish and Portuguese boys were taken at St Edward's College, Liverpool. (Hostage to Bellasis, n.d., *L&D* XXI, p.28n) South Americans were considered to be "for a time the ruin of Oscott". (Newman to Bellasis, 24 Jul 1862, *L&D* XX, p.243)

240. Newman had asked Bellasis, "What are we to do about *foreign* boys? [...] Are we to demand certain testimonials of conduct etc? Certain introductions thro' Englishmen for the parents? Are we to raise the pension to them etc?" Newman hoped Bellasis could discuss the matter with Hope-Scott, though he realised Hope-Scott was recovering from the loss two more children. (Newman to Bellasis, 24 Jul 1862 & Bellasis to Newman, 27 Jul 1862, *L&D* XX, p.243)

exceptionally. Three years later Newman was able to declare the success of the policy.²⁴¹ Despite the precautions many foreigners were accepted — 22 out of 99 boys in the five-year period 1867–72.²⁴² Under his admissions policy, Newman claimed that there were no noticeable differences between foreign and English boys.²⁴³ The precautions taken indicate that they were not accepted to boost numbers — fewer were admitted than at the Catholic colleges.

Newman was prepared to adopt measures in order to protect the atmosphere in the school, to avert the danger of just one "undesirable" boy. He realised that precocious foreign lads who acted like little men could bring about the school's destruction — "it would be a moral scarletina". Thus he was wary of accepting the 15-year-old Prince Imperial, son of Napoleon III, who was in exile in Chislehurst.²⁴⁴ It was because he was interested in imparting a full intellectual and spiritual formation that he laid great stress on boys starting when young.²⁴⁵ By the time "they were 15 or 16", those who started when young "were of great use to us, set a good example, and acted with much zeal and steadiness as prefects of the school".²⁴⁶ A dilemma arose over whether to continue accepting day-boys, because parents objected to them being unsupervised out of school hours.²⁴⁷ Newman decided to follow Bellasis's advice. The rule allowing them was removed from the prospectus to avoid criticism, on the understanding that exceptions

241. All the foreign boys had been very satisfactory bar two, one of whom was quickly removed. (Newman to Hope-Scott, 25 Sep 1865, *L&D* XXII, p.59) That the arrangement was not fully satisfactory is indicated by an amendment in a draft prospectus. It stated, "On account of the different modes of education pursued in England and the continent, it is considered very undesirable that any foreign boy should come to the School at any age beyond 10 or 11." (Draft alteration inserted in school prospectus, n.d. [1865/66], BOA) A later, post-1879 prospectus (BOA) declared: "The School undertakes the care of boys, whose parents live in India, all the year round".

242. Newman to Northcote, 26 Mar 1872, *L&D* XXXI, p.92*, which was in answer to a questionnaire

243. Newman designated foreigners those "not of the United Kingdom". (Newman to Bellasis, 24 Jan 1864, *L&D* XXI, p.28)

244. St John raised two problems: whether he would keep to the rules — and thus satisfy the masters — and whether he would join in games — and be popular with the other boys. (Newman to Lady Fullerton, 9 Apr 1871, *L&D* XXV, p.312)

245. Bellasis to Wiseman, 6 Mar 1858, BOA & Newman's memorandum, 16 Feb 1862, *L&D* XX, p.98

246. Newman to Lady Fullerton, 9 Apr 1871, *L&D* XXV, p.312

247. Newman's memorandum, 9 Sep 1862, *L&D* XX, p.269. Antipathy to day-boys was not an uncommon problem at public schools owing to class divisions between them and boarders. At Harrow the day-boys were persecuted because they were of a lower social rank. (Chandos, *op.cit.*, p.73) Generally, day-boys were ostracised at the best schools and subjected to taunting. (Bamford, *The rise of the public schools*, pp.195–6)

would be made.²⁴⁸ As on other issues, the negotiations relied on Bellasis acting as a buffer between Newman and parents.²⁴⁹

Statistics on the origin of pupils by nationality at the Catholic colleges puts Newman's policy into context. When B. Ward was writing the history of St Edmund's he asked Gillow to analyse the list of past pupils. As the results undermined Ware's claim to be a great English Catholic school, they were not included! After 1840 the proportion of English:foreigners:Irish at Ware was 1:1:2 — Stonyhurst's figures were little different, "the English being in a sad minority". Oscott had nearly 50 per cent English but, like Ushaw, was losing ground fast. Being a preparatory school, Sedgley Park had the highest proportion of English — 73 per cent were English or Welsh.²⁵⁰ My analysis on the school's pupils yields an approximate proportion of 4:1:1 for the period 1859–72.²⁵¹

Financial and other constraints on development

During the crisis Newman pressed Bellasis, one last time, on the matter of parental responsibility in shouldering the school's financial burden. No new arguments were given: the parents had the whole advantage of the foundation, the Oratory the risk; the parents had provided little, just £1050, while the Oratory had invested heavily, £3530 on the church and £8503 on other buildings and land; the Oratory had given "time, thought, labour, and anxieties". Newman offered a practical suggestion to encourage the "gentlemen in London" to do more: they could oversee the school's accounts.²⁵² It was

248. Just before the crisis, Baker asked to send his two sons as day-boys. They were accepted in 1862. Henry Sherston Baker (1814–74) was an Oxford-educated convert and barrister whose sons had been educated at home. In 1878 the Oratory decided not to admit day-boys despite the pressure from friends in Birmingham. Newman had first consulted Pattison, the Rector of Lincoln College, Oxford, about the pros and cons of mixing boarders and day-boys. Newman revealed that his instincts were to refuse, while friendship and interest pulled the other way. (Newman to Pattison, 3 Apr 1878, *L&D* XXVIII, p.339)

249. Bellasis to Newman, 16 Dec 1861, BOA; Mrs Fitzherbert to Bellasis, 23 Dec 1861, BOA; Bellasis to Newman, 26 Dec 1861, BOA; Newman to Bellasis, 27 Dec 1861, *L&D* XX, p.89; Bellasis to Mrs Fitzherbert, 31 Dec 1861, BOA; Newman to Bellasis, 3 Jan 1862, *L&D* XX, p.105

250. At Sedgley Park, 20 per cent were of Irish or Scottish stock, while 7 per cent were foreigners. The great difficulty in assigning nationalities was acknowledged. (F. Roberts, *op. cit.*, p.113)

251. Of the 248 pupils who entered, 33 were from Ireland and 42 were from outside the British Isles. There were few boys from Wales or Scotland.

252. Newman to Bellasis, 24 Dec 1861, *L&D* XX, pp.87–8. Bellasis was lukewarm about the idea of a "lay Committee in London". Its composition would be problematic: a representative body from the parents would

at this point that Bellasis revealed to Newman the difficulties he had encountered in obtaining financial backing for the school. The £1050 collected had only come after "a hard canvass and many refusals". Many parents were not in a position to contribute. Of those who were, many had had to be coaxed into sending their sons, had grumbled at the expense of doing so, and were not yet sufficiently convinced of the benefit. At the time he had exhausted all the possibilities open to him, and was unable to contribute more personally. He felt at a loss to see what more he could do.²⁵³

Did this revelation cause Newman to re-think his conception of parental responsibility? It would seem so, to judge from the absence of further mention of the matter with Bellasis. However, other evidence suggests an alternative explanation. Newman confided in his bishop that "after such a catastrophe, we must be for some time on trial even in the minds of our friends".²⁵⁴ Effectively the clock had been turned back and the trial period extended. Many more years of stability would be needed to restore confidence and put the school in a position of strength from which Bellasis could make extra demands on parents. It seems that the propitious moment did not arrive. New uncertainties arose and hovered over the foundation for many years, and time ran out.²⁵⁵

Newman worked to the principle that the Oratory ought not to subsidise the school. Accordingly the debt due to capital expenditure (except on the church) was serviced by interest payments from the school's current account. Realising that Darnell could not keep accounts and was "losing a great sum", Newman had replaced him in January 1861, but only after the crisis did Newman have the freedom to tackle the situation properly.²⁵⁶ Thereafter he was constantly on the lookout for measures to cut the running deficit. A charge of 1 guinea was levied for each church sitting;²⁵⁷ a previous decision not to

never do. It was possible that consultants appointed by Newman might shield him from difficulties and provide backing for his policy, but they could equally prove a hindrance. He saw no advantage in them examining the accounts. (Bellasis to Newman, 26 Dec 1861, BOA)

253. Bellasis to Newman, 26 Dec 1861, BOA

254. Newman to Ullathorne, 31 Jan 1862, *L&D XX*, p.144

255. Bellasis retired in 1866 after 42 years in the legal profession. His health was declining and he began wintering at Hyères with Hope-Scott. (Bellasis, *op.cit.*, p.207)

256. Newman to Hope-Scott, 8 Feb 1863, *L&D XX*, p.406

257. The cause of the extra charge was made transparent to Colyar: work in the church had finished; the

charge for Bass ale was reversed;²⁵⁸ the rule on music lessons was enforced;²⁵⁹ an extra charge was introduced for boys who had meat or eggs for breakfast;²⁶⁰ the wastage on employing servants in the vacation was reduced.²⁶¹

Such measures provide confirmation of a financial responsibility in Newman that was lacking in Darnell. Yet, in spite of them, Newman had to admit: "The truth is the school cannot be done at £80 — in the way we do it."²⁶² He regretted not starting with higher fees.²⁶³ The school's finances were delicately balanced. If it had 80 boys it would flourish, whereas every boy below 70 represented a loss. In 1864 measles and mumps reduced numbers one term to 58.²⁶⁴ The two dames' houses continued to operate as independent units with their own kitchens and servants, "each [dame] supreme in her own place".²⁶⁵ The main Oratory building also had its kitchen and servants. The arrangement was an expensive one. The saving achieved by doing without one of the dames' houses and moving the boys into the main building was critical.²⁶⁶ When Miss Mitchell finally left, only one dame's house remained, despite attempts to find a replacement.²⁶⁷ As

church had no endowment; other schools charged for sittings; and parents would have to pay it at their own church if their sons were with them. (Bellasis to Newman, 27 Dec 1861, BOA & Newman to Colyar, 28 Jan 1862, *L&D XX*, p.140)

258. Newman justified the change on the grounds that Bass cost considerably more than "common beer", and that so many had it. (Newman to Colyar, 28 Jan 1862, *L&D XX*, p.141) Newman had previously agreed with the two dames a scale of charges for Bass's beer, port wine, sherry and stout. (*Day book*, Sep 1861, BOA)

259. The enforcement of the rule stating that music lessons were to be charged for, unless approved by the headmaster, meant a saving of about £50 p.a. (Newman to Hope-Scott, 8 Mar 1863, *L&D XX*, pp.418-19)

260. Circular letter to parents, 20 July 1866, *L&D XXII*, p.263

261. Newman to Hope-Scott, 8 Feb 1863, *L&D XX*, p.406

262. Newman to H. Wilberforce, 31 Jul 1862, *L&D XX*, p.249

263. Newman had also underestimated costs at the collegiate houses of the Catholic University. (J.S.F. McGrath, 'Newman's work for university education in Ireland', D.Phil., Oxford, 1948, pp.541 & 543)

264. Newman to Hope-Scott, 28 Apr 1865, *L&D XXI*, p.453

265. Newman to Hope-Scott, 22 Jun 1863, *L&D XX*, p.478

266. It included the dame's remuneration of £40 p.a. (Newman to Neville, 15 Aug 1862, *L&D XX*, p.260)

267. Newman to Bellasis, 1 & 6 Mar 1862, *L&D XX*, pp.160 & 163. There was briefly a second dame, Mrs Knight, from September 1869 to March 1870. (*Further extracts from a school boy's diary*, 18 Sep 1869 & 5 Mar 1870, BOA) It seems that the widowed mother of one of the boys, Mrs Owen Jones, also acted as a dame for a while. (J. Jackson, *op. cit.*, p.224)

feminine care for younger boys was part of the founding ideal, it was not abandoned. Miss Bowles²⁶⁸ succeeded Mrs Wootten on her death in 1876.

During the brief period pupils had been taken in by Moody, the school had lost about £500 and a clique of boys had been allowed to form. The question of masters taking boarders was raised after the crisis by those anxious to boost their income. The Fathers decided to allow it only in exceptional circumstances: to prevent boys leaving, or to attract new boys. In such cases day fees were to be charged by the school, leaving the master to make his own arrangements with parents.²⁶⁹ The decision was based primarily on financial considerations. The school needed the full fees to meet its running costs. It was not yet in a position to imitate Eton or other public schools, "for *we* are not *established*, nor have a tradition — and arrangements might be dangerous to *us* which are harmless in such old and recognised institutions". There was also the risk that a housemaster might leave and take his boys with him.²⁷⁰ Despite not operating the housemaster system, elements of it were present. Each dormitory was looked after by a master, and boys were placed under house tutors.²⁷¹

Newman summed up the school's main difficulty: "The Oratory *must* be in a *town*, and a school *ought to be* in the *country*". The school's expenses were all dearer in a town: their only advantage was easier access to medical aid. (A second advantage was the school's close proximity to a railway station.) Edgbaston was rapidly becoming "a populous neighbourhood" and this was acting "unfavorably on the interests of the school", yet the Oratory was heavily committed to it. A partial solution was to build a summer school on Oratory ground at Rednal, at a cost of a further £3000, the plan being to move the "whole school establishment (not the Oratory) to this place from St Philip's Day (May

268. Emily Bowles (1818–1905) was the sister of F.S. Bowles who was received into the Church with Newman and who joined the Oratory. She became a Catholic in Rome in 1843, joined the order Mrs Connelly was founding but later quarrelled with her. She had declined the post of dame on Miss Mitchell's departure. (*L&D* XX, p.523n) Other than her five years as dame at the school, she spent the rest of her life writing and translating religious books. Though a lady of breeding and culture, she lacked experience of dealing with boys. (Tristram, 'The Oratory School', Aug 1934, p.287)

269. Fees for day-boys were 39 guineas p.a. (School prospectus, n.d. [1861], BOA)

270. Newman's memorandum, 9 Sep 1862, *L&D* XX, p.269n

271. Newman to Hope-Scott, 2 Feb 1862, *L&D* XX, p.147 & Newman to Lamb, 19 Aug 1867, *L&D* XXXI, pp.84–5*

26) till the Long Vac (July 20) and from September 10 to the end of October". If the scheme attracted 10–15 more boys it would break even, but the risk of the extra investment was judged to be too great.²⁷²

In 1867 Hope-Scott encouraged Newman to view the school more as a charitable enterprise than one that aimed to be self-sufficient. Annual losses till then averaged about £340, in spite of Newman employing every means at his disposal (except using Oratory money as a subsidy). The only prospect for recovery was the expectation of £4000 from Mrs Wootten,²⁷³ besides what the Fathers left.²⁷⁴ Hope-Scott advised Newman to cease paying the Fathers for their services to the school,²⁷⁵ as old boys and others would soon be in a position to help. If they knew the Fathers were paid "it would damn the whole concern". He argued that if the school was Oratory work it ought to be done gratuitously since they would not be paid if otherwise engaged.²⁷⁶ As Hope-Scott anticipated, the school began to receive bequests. Most of those who subscribed to the Oxford Oratory fund in 1866–67 agreed that the money could be used for school purposes, once it was clear that the Oxford project was doomed.²⁷⁷ In 1872 a school chapel was built which involved completion of a cloister. More land next to the school was bought for expansion and new playing fields were acquired. The Duke of Norfolk and Hope-Scott each gave £1000: other contributions amounted to nearly £2000.²⁷⁸ In 1881 Newman allocated the annual income from his publications — about £250 — to Oratory and school purposes.²⁷⁹

272. Newman to Hope-Scott, 28 Apr 1865, *L&D* XXI, pp.453–4 & 25 Sep 1865, *L&D* XXII, p.59

273. In 1862 she made out her property to the Oratory in order to meet the school's debts, in return for an annuity which began in 1870. (*L&D* XXV, p.11n)

274. The average loss of £338 p.a. was after paying £274 p.a. to the Oratory as interest on sums invested in buildings. (Newman to St John, 18 Apr 1867, *L&D* XXIII, pp.173–4)

275. St John was paid £100 p.a. (Newman to St John, 5 Jan 1863, *L&D* XX, p.386)

276. St John to Newman, 24 Apr 1867, *L&D* XXIII, p.174n

277. *L&D* XXIX, p.79n. It amounted to just over £2000, most of which came from school promoters and parents. (*L&D* XXIII, pp.20–1n; Newman to Hope-Scott, 22 Apr 1872, *L&D* XXVI, p.70) The saga over starting an Oxford Oratory is dealt with in the next chapter.

278. The bulk came from parents and promoters: £200 from Gaisford; £100 each from Anderton, Bellasis, Gould, Lamb, Monteith, F.R. Ward & R. Ward; £50 each from Palmer and Shaw. Other large contributions were: £100 each from the Duchess of Argyle, the Earl of Dunraven and C. Moore; and £50 from both Berkeley and Gerard. The list of contributions, both for general purposes and the school chapel, was sent with a circular letter asking for further help. (Circular letter, 15 Aug 1872, *L&D* XXVI, pp.146–7; list of contributions for general purposes & list of contributions to the school chapel, BOA)

279. Newman's memorandum on copyrights, 4 Dec 1881, *L&D* XXX, p.29

The Duke of Norfolk later gave a further £1500.²⁸⁰

In February 1872 St John was replaced by 29-year-old Norris,²⁸¹ the only cradle Catholic at the Oratory, and the only one without an Oxbridge background. School entry numbers fell sharply in the first two years of his 39-year reign, but soon recovered. Although he had no pretensions to being a scholar, he was a natural schoolmaster and a good disciplinarian, while a patient and sympathetic figure.²⁸² The loss of Mrs Wootten in January 1876 may have triggered another drop.²⁸³ The lean years continued until 1885, numbers remaining at about 50.²⁸⁴

Conclusion

The Darnell affair had been a stern test, yet Newman and his friends stuck to their founding ideal: a school with a lay character; a liberal education; first-class teachers; the feminine influence of the dames; a high premium set on spiritual values; and partnership with parents in education. The ability to acquire public-school characteristics was tempered by inadequate financial backing and conditioned by the imperatives of Catholic morality. The lack of a proper endowment constrained the school's development on various fronts: extending the dame system; allowing masters to lodge boys; acquiring a country location; and the ability to attract and retain good staff. Acton's opinion that Newman opposed the idea of a public school is mistaken. Newman was convinced that the idea was workable. Being the only cradle Catholic among the promoters, Acton was less familiar with life at the public schools and therefore their deficiencies. From W.G. Ward's perspective it was clear that the school differed from the colleges in being "like

280. He asked for the first half to be used for the reconstruction and furnishing of the school library. (May 1885, *L&D* XXX, p.85n)

281. John Norris (1843–1911) was born into a Lancashire Catholic family, attended Merchant Taylors' School, Crosby and the Catholic Institute, Liverpool, and was trained for the priesthood at Ushaw. He was appointed assistant Prefect of the school in 1868.

282. Tristram, 'The Oratory School', Jan–Apr 1934, pp.187–9, 199–201 & 227–9

283. See Appendix II for a bar chart of admission numbers at the Oratory School for the period 1859–90.

284. Newman to Pope Leo XIII, Jun 1879, *L&D* XXIX, p.135 & Newman to Miss Giberne, 26 Apr 1882, *L&D* XXX, p.83. Nevertheless in 1883 the average annual loss from the beginning was only £100. (Newman to R. Pope, 19 Sep 1883, *L&D* XXX, p.257)

our public schools and universities — with great freedom of life".²⁸⁵

Originally Newman had spoken of setting up a school "such as Eton or Winchester".²⁸⁶ Eton customs, such as the dame system, had been blended with Winchester traditions, favoured by Darnell. After the crisis Newman began to speak of "a miniature Winchester or Westminster"²⁸⁷ instead of "a Catholic Eton".²⁸⁸ Acton called the school a "Winchester model".²⁸⁹ Barnes attributes the school's prefect system to the influence of staff: Darnell, then Arnold and Neville, from Winchester, and St John from Westminster.²⁹⁰ The first reference to prefects at the Oratory School occurs in 1862,²⁹¹ and it is clear that this distinguishing public-school feature became highly developed.²⁹² Although the prefects were appointed, Newman allowed the boys to elect the school captain.²⁹³ Newman's knowledge of the great public schools was undoubtedly enlarged by the Clarendon Report.²⁹⁴ If, for reasons other than those stated above, the Oratory School did not approximate closely to the great schools it was because Newman was as much inspired by an idealised form of the public school as by the reality. This was

285. F. Rogers to E. Rogers, 1863, which describes a dinner-table conversation between W.G. Ward and Rogers. (F. Rogers, *Letters of Lord Blachford*, ed. G.E. Marindin, London, 1896, p.249)

286. Newman to Bellasis, 28 Oct 1857, *L&D* XVIII, p.153. Monsell told Newman that the tone of the school reminded him of Winchester and Eton. (Monsell to Newman, 7 Jun 1863, *L&D* XX, p.466)

287. Newman to Crawley, 9 Apr 1863, *L&D* XX, p.428

288. In an autobiographical sketch Newman related that, in 1859, "I began a school on the plan of the Protestant public schools, Winchester, Rugby, etc." (Newman's memorandum, 26 Oct 1863, *Autobiographical writings*, p.13)

289. MacDougall, *op.cit.*, p.19. Lord Howard, an ex-pupil of the Oratory School, declares: "Winchester was the chief English Public School held up to us as a model." ('Reminiscences of an old boy', *Oratory School Magazine* XCVIII, Jul 1940, p.3)

290. Barnes, *op.cit.*, pp.247–8. Westminster was founded by Elizabeth I on the model of Winchester. Thus it inherited Wykeham's prefect system which was incorporated in his statutes. Strictly speaking, there was no prefect system at Eton. (Staunton, *op. cit.*, pp.34–5 & 92–3)

291. Newman to Hope-Scott, 2 Feb 1862, *L&D* XX, p.147

292. Vaughan, headmaster of Harrow in the period 1844–59, stated that the authority of senior boys was "the universal rule in Public Schools, the distinguishing feature of Public as contrasted with Private Schools". (Quoted in Chandos, *op. cit.*, p.241) At Jesuit schools older boys had no role in the discipline of younger ones. (Taunton Report V, p.227)

293. Various types of prefect — of school, bounds, hall, chapel, library and the three boarding houses — were appointed. (*Extracts from a school boy's diary*, 27 Apr 1865, and *Further extracts from a school boy's diary*, 9 Oct 1868 & 10 Feb 1869, BOA)

294. He acquired a copy when it appeared in 1864. (Newman to Monsell, 5 Aug 1864, *L&D* XXI, p.183) The four volumes in Newman's library appear to be without annotations, according to Tracey, the archivist.

manifested in the concerted bid to occupy the academic high ground: engaging first-class masters; espousal of the cultivation of the intellect and good learning; high parental expectations of academic progress; detailed termly reports; the introduction of monthly testing; exams conducted with greater formality; the use of prizes to stimulate competition; and increased expenditure on school books.²⁹⁵ Jackson and Upton have both erred in categorising what was novel and idiosyncratic: Jackson by calling the foundation a large private school,²⁹⁶ and Upton by regarding it as a conventional public school.

Newman's active involvement after the crisis ensured that masters and dames could work in their respective spheres without clashing, according to his original conception.

A year after the crisis Newman told a friend

It was *quite possible* to lay down rules by which the Masters and the Dames could keep the peace with each other — and this the event has shown, for there has been no quarrel or shadow of quarrel between them throughout the past year — each side has kept to his or her own department.²⁹⁷

The role of the dames in making school "a second home"²⁹⁸ to the boys was not curtailed: it remained a vital part of the education provided.²⁹⁹ Such was Mrs Wootten's continued contribution that Newman could say that she and St John had been "the life and making of the School".³⁰⁰

295. In the first two terms after the crisis, £200 was spent on books. (Newman to St John, 30 July 1862, *L&D* XX, p.249) The expense was passed on to parents. (*L&D* XXI, p.369n)

296. Jackson identifies six characteristics of the Oratory School by which it bore little comparison to the major public schools: the prefects were not given full executive power; the curriculum was too broad; there was too little emphasis on physical prowess; Newman, unlike other Victorian headmasters, did not cane (Jackson assumes that Newman, not St John, was headmaster); the location was unsuitable (though its setting was more rural than the four great schools in London); the dame arrangement was used instead of the housemaster system (despite Eton's example). (Jackson, *op. cit.*, p.229)

297. Newman to Miss Giberne, 24 Dec 1862, *L&D* XX p.371

298. Newman used this phrase in his 'Circular to the masters, tutors, and dames of the Oratory School', 19 Dec 1862, *L&D* XX, p.366. After nine years at the school, Edward Bellasis described it as "another home", and Newman as "another father". (E. Bellasis to Newman, 19 Nov 1870, *L&D* XXV, p.233n)

299. A convert, who taught briefly at the school before becoming an Oratorian, describes meeting Newman about a new prospectus. Newman originally wanted only those with degrees named on it, but he gave way and agreed to listing all masters on condition that the dame, Mrs Holden, was also included. Newman "went on vigorously to insist upon the importance of this specialty of ours — a lady-matron". (Eaglesim's diary, Jan 1882, BOA)

300. Newman to Miss Bowles, 4 Dec 1875, *L&D* XXVII, p.390. Newman told a convert parent that a conversation with Mrs Wootten about his son was worth many with himself. (Newman to Leigh, 29 Apr 1870, *L&D* XXV, p.117)

The development of the school after the crisis was along Newman's lines. In raising the standards of religious instruction and training, Newman was cautious not to compromise the school's secular character. His sensitivity to the ways of boys, foibles and all, enabled him to pitch his demands with precision, and therefore with success. He put great emphasis on attention to the individual and on liaison with parents. Both these striking features were established by dint of personal application: writing all the reports, and seeing boys individually after exams. Jackson is correct when he judges that Newman's influence derived from dealing with boys separately or in small groups, rather than addressing them en masse. A pupil described him as a gentle, understanding and approachable figure for whom nothing was too trivial to attend to. (Newman's nickname was 'old Jack', or simply 'Jack'.) When the editorial of the *Weekly Wasp*, a magazine run entirely by boys, criticised the school administration for providing inadequate facilities, Newman saw to it that their grievances were met.³⁰¹

Darnell had appeared to possess all the necessary qualities for undertaking the headmastership. By conventional standards he was a fine teacher, and he was held in high esteem by many parents.³⁰² Yet, for all his qualities, he turned out to be unsuitable, as did the masters he appointed. The inescapable conclusion is that Newman's idea of a school differed from conventional models. McClelland has drawn attention to an apparent contradiction: Darnell's reputation as a tough disciplinarian and his wish to grant boys the freedom given at Eton.³⁰³ Both characteristics were present at Eton: endless floggings coexisted with an extremely lax regime.³⁰⁴ Newman approved of neither. He disliked "the notion of corporal punishment" and the threat of it too. He once objected to a boy's

301. One concerned lack of equipment in the gymnasium, another the solitary wash-basin in the lavatories. Newman ignored other complaints, such as the plea that chapel services be shortened or made voluntary. (Jackson, *op. cit.*, pp.198 & 210-11)

302. Among those who sang his praises were Palmer, Scott-Murray, Thynne, Mrs Waller and F.R. Ward.

303. McClelland, *A Catholic Eton*, p.13. He quotes from a letter that stated that Darnell aimed at "giving a good deal of liberty".

304. Darnell's attitude reflected his public-school upbringing where rules were openly flouted. It was typified by the custom of shirking at Eton, which permitted the flouting of rules provided deference was shown to authority. Thus a boy contravening rules on bounds was ignored when seen by a master, provided he made a gesture such as stepping inside a doorway or entering a shop. (Clarendon Report III, p.269) At Eton "nothing is permitted [...] but everything is winked at". (Chandos, *op. cit.*, pp.175-6 & 212-14) It was this attitude that led Gladstone to describe Eton as "the greatest pagan school in Christendom". (Quoted in Mohnen, *op. cit.*, n.50)

ears being pulled, because "I think their persons should be sacred."³⁰⁵ Under him there was no fagging, and corporal punishment was rarely administered.³⁰⁶ Yet, when it was deemed necessary Newman refused to cave in to parental objections and even threats.³⁰⁷ After the crisis he exercised his presiding role with a marked firmness of purpose.³⁰⁸ Manifestations of laxity were swiftly corrected, as after the discovery of the lottery. A new balance was sought in the delicate business of transition from boyhood to manhood, with a premium set on trust.³⁰⁹

Newman was more concerned about the quality of education offered than school numbers. A year after Darnell's departure he was convinced that the school was "more orderly, more religious, more cheerful, and more studious" than previously.³¹⁰ By ensuring it lived up to his own high criteria, he hoped numbers would eventually pick up. Comments he received from parents reinforced his judgement of the school's internal health.³¹¹ His verdict was: "The school flourishes, except in numbers"; it "prosperes much internally" and "really has fulfilled (if we dare speak without boasting) the problem

305. His remarks referred to the man in charge, outside lesson-time, of the three or four boys being educated at the Oratory. (Newman to Faber, 6 Feb 1849, *L&D* XIII, p.27)

306. Two priests "who superintend the school" were in charge of corporal punishment. (Newman to Lamb, 9 Sep 1867, *L&D* XXXI, p.85*) A reference by Moody to disliking sending boys to Prefects for impositions at Oscott suggests that the masters at the school were more used to resolving disciplinary problems themselves — at least, under Darnell. (Moody's diary, 2 Feb 1862, BOA) Newman held that, "the good old punishment of flogging, is, in due moderation as to severity and frequency, the most efficacious of punishments", being "the most prompt and summary, and the least irritating and annoying punishments to the subjects of it. It is done and over — there is nothing to brood over, nothing to create a grudge, at least to English boys." (Newman to Taylor, 15 Feb 1869, *L&D* XXIV p.216)

307. Hoghton threatened to withdraw both his sons rather than allow one to receive corporal punishment. Newman replied with the threat of expulsion unless the punishment was carried out, whereupon Hoghton backed down. (Newman to Hoghton, 19 Nov 1865, *L&D* XXII, p.106)

308. In 1881 Newman received complaints about the headmaster, Norris, from the masters and the other Fathers. Newman conveyed the dissatisfaction to Norris and "especially his tendency to centralise authority in himself". Norris in turn complained about the interference of the younger Fathers in the school. Newman's intervention seems to have averted the possibility of another crisis. (Eaglesim's diary, Jan–Feb 1882, BOA)

309. Commenting about university residence, Newman declared: "Nothing is more perilous than the sudden transition from restraint to liberty". Experience had taught that "boys who are kept jealously at home or under severe schoolmasters till the very moment they are called to take part in the business of the world, are the very persons about whom we have most cause to entertain misgivings". (Newman, *My campaign in Ireland*, pp.36-7)

310. Newman to Miss Giberne, 24 Dec 1862, *L&D* XX, p.371

311. Mrs F.R. Ward to Newman, *L&D* XXII, p.123n & the Duchess of Norfolk to Newman, 6 Jul 1864, *L&D* XXI, p.149n

of combining a good intellectual education with Catholic morality".³¹¹

311. Newman to Miss Bathurst, 21 Jan 1866, *L&D* XXII, p.135 & Newman to Hope-Scott, 28 Apr 1865, *L&D* XXI, p.453

CHAPTER VII AN UNEASY POSITION IN THE SYSTEM OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION

The buoyancy of Oratory School numbers in the aftermath of the crisis suggests that it weathered the storm. Furthermore, the testimony of masters and parents indicates that it grew stronger internally. This evidence provokes an important question. If the experiment of forming the first Catholic public school was so successful, why did it not become the undisputed premier Catholic school? Why did school numbers remain stagnant? McClelland reckons that the crisis was entirely to blame, since the Catholic aristocracy soon began to drift back to the older and more stable Catholic foundations.¹ There is some evidence to support this claim: between 1862 and 1865 seven boys were transferred to Oscott, and another seven followed in the next 24 years.² However, there are two reasons why the argument is unconvincing. The Oratory School's strongest competitors proved to be two younger foundations, while the school list reveals that relatively few of the old Catholic families had switched to the school, so that reference to an exodus is inappropriate.³ A full investigation of the school's predicament uncovers other reasons for its limited success. Sections on each of the three major factors will show how they threatened the school's very existence.

The 'university question' frustrated the school's main purpose: preparation in a public school for a university education along the lines of Oxford or Cambridge. The official warning to Catholics against going to Oxford and Cambridge, issued in 1865, was strengthened in 1867, and only revoked in 1895, after Newman's death. Coverage of the university question is warranted because of its impact on the school. As the lower tier for provision of a liberal education, the school became implicated in the bid to secure its

1. McClelland, 'A Catholic Eton', p.14

2. Several joined elder brothers there, or were followed by younger brothers. Poole was joined by two younger brothers; the two Bethells joined two elder brothers there; Fitzgerald joined an elder brother and three cousins; Palmer with one elder and two younger brothers; and Flanagan with a younger brother, who was followed by three others. While the eldest Mostyn remained at the Oratory School, his younger brothers attended their father's *alma mater*, Oscott. In the period 1862–89 six boys were transferred from Oscott to the Oratory School.

3. Names from leading old Catholic families — Berkeley, Clifford, Dormer, Eyre, Fairfax-Cholmeley, Fitzalan, Howard, Lovat, Petre, Riddell, Southwell, Talbot, Vaughan and Wheble — are sprinkled across the entry lists of the school during the period 1859–90, though not in considerable numbers.

upper part. It is informative to compare the two movements — for Catholic university education and Catholic public-school education — and Newman's attitude to the two promotional groups.

Another adverse circumstance was the campaign of gossip and calumny orchestrated by supporters of the colleges, in which the school was "almost 'done to death by envious tongues'".⁴ This reached a climax in 1867 when Cardinal Barnabò, the Secretary of Propaganda, threatened to close the school for flouting Church policy on attendance at Oxford. St John was dispatched to Rome to clear the name of Newman and the school. Catholic opposition to Newman is covered by Ker and Trevor,⁵ but a fuller picture from the school's standpoint is required.

The third factor was the competition within the Catholic system which intensified with each new foundation. The Jesuits began Beaumont Lodge in 1861 in an attractive location, originally part of Windsor Great Park. As they also took younger boys and had fees £20 lower, it soon became the main rival. In 1877 Petre founded a Catholic public school at Woburn Park with superb facilities. Its characteristics made it a direct competitor, and a grim struggle for survival ensued until Petre closed his school in 1884. An overview of the evolving system of Catholic education will demonstrate its competitiveness and test the Oratory School's contribution as a 'beacon school'. The evidence of an official investigation into the system in 1872 enables its development since 1859 to be assessed. The perceived deficiencies at either end of this period — those of the school's founders and those of the official survey — can be compared.

The three factors merit detailed examination as each contributes to a fuller appreciation of the setting of the school and the part it played in the turbulent history of the Catholic Church in England in the nineteenth century. An additional section compares the only two genuine attempts at a Catholic public school in the nineteenth century — those of Newman and Petre.

4. Newman to Simeon, 20 Apr 1867, *L&D* XXIII, p.140

5. Ker, *Newman: a biography*, pp.471, 514, 521 & 614; Trevor, *Light in winter*, pp.189, 231 & 292-3

The university question

A principal reason for Newman involving himself in the school foundation was to feed the Catholic University with suitably prepared boys.⁶ Despite his stamp on the university and the English presence there, Newman received no support from the school promoters or parents in his strategy.⁷ While the Catholic colleges used their affiliation to London University to provide tertiary education, precious little interest was shown among the school parents for this option.⁸ Newman was in no position to recommend it to parents.⁹ For the vast majority of Oratory School parents the only university education they wished for their sons was that provided at the ancient universities. Church policy, however, one of opposition to mixed education, had recently been fortified.¹⁰ Consequently "the school was left in something of a limbo, its basic purpose, to give the pre-university part of a liberal education, being frustrated".¹¹ Besides, unlike the Catholic colleges, it was unable to offer a philosophy course for lay boys.¹² This combination of circumstances meant that

6. Newman to Woodlock, 7 Mar 1862, *L&D XX*, pp.163–4. Newman's view of the complementary roles of school and university is suggested by McClelland when he likens Newman to Jowett in considering the university as "a sort of 'super public school'". (McClelland, *English Roman Catholics and higher education*, p.114)

7. No boy from Newman's time fulfilled his wish, even though many of the boys came from Ireland. Mohnen has traced 39 boys from Newman's time who proceeded from the school to university. Two boys went on to the Catholic University in Louvain in the 1870s. (Mohnen, *op. cit.*, p.140)

8. Two Bellasis boys were among the few who took the London University exams, although their father intended them to go to Oxford before the episcopal warning of 1865.

9. London University had been a principal subject of attack in the *Idea of a university* because it was founded on expressly secular principles, with a constitutional ban on the teaching of religion. Culler suggests that the university violated another of Newman's principles: by its non-residential and professorial character it emphasised "the imparting of knowledge rather than the forming of minds". (Culler, *op. cit.*, p.99) In spite of his aversion to London University, Newman did inform parents of the possibility of studying for its exams at the school. (Newman to Mrs Sparrow, 25 Aug 1863, *L&D XX*, p.511) McClelland asserts that Newman was duplicit in doing so. ('The Kensington scheme: a reply', *Month XXXIII*, 1965, pp.180)

10. In 1847 the Irish bishops and Propaganda issued a warning against attendance at the Queen's Colleges.

11. Nash, *op. cit.*, p.4

12. In 1871 Stonyhurst had 270 boys and 30–40 young men aged 17–21. (Newman to St John, 30 Jul 1871, *L&D XXV*, p.366) Numbers of the latter peaked at about 50 in 1880/81. The 'philosophy department' was comprised of lay philosophers proper, those following London University courses, and others completing their education under private tuition. The latter were mainly wealthy foreigners who dominated in the period 1845–85 to the detriment of the academic tone. Sire maintains that the higher fees for philosophers kept the boys' fees low, being approximately double. With the abolition of the philosophers, fees rose from £65, in 1916, to £135, in 1922. (Sire, *op. cit.*, pp.6, 31, 95, 164–5)

the school suffered far more than any of the colleges.¹³

Newman realised the problem would become more acute as the boys approached university age.¹⁴ In 1865 he observed the effect: "Our boys go on well till they get near the top of the School — but, when they are once put into the fifth or sixth form, they languish and get slovenly — i.e. for want of a *stimulus*. They have no object before them."¹⁵ Before the crisis Acton, Bellasis and Darnell had discussed how a university might be started. Darnell entertained grand plans for one, whereas Acton envisaged it growing out of the school and proposed beginning with a philosophy faculty for the liberal arts.¹⁶ He thought that "the school must ultimately decide" the university question, "either by setting up a Catholic university [...] or by getting a college at Oxford [...] or [...] by the abolition of the sectarian character of the university". He also realised that "When the first generation of boys has been trained to the university level and turned out of Edgbaston — unless one of these alternatives is provided, it will break down — for no fruit can ripen if the year ends in June."¹⁷

It was hoped that the university question would soon be resolved. Initially, Newman persevered with the Catholic University connection. He thought its only chance to attract Englishmen was by "the establishment of an English College in it with English revenues". The more feasible, but less attractive, alternative was to set up a college in England, affiliated to the university, just as the colleges were affiliated to London

13. Of the 16 boys who entered the school in 1859, four transferred to Stonyhurst — two in 1868 and two in 1870 — presumably to complete their studies.

14. Monsell asked where the Oratory School's pupils would go on to; abroad, "to be made foreigners of", to the army or to Oxford? (Monsell to Newman, 7 Jun 1863 & Newman to Monsell, 10 Jun 1863, *L&D* XX, pp.466–7)

15. Newman felt unable to answer parents who asked him: "'What *are* we to do with Charlie or Richard? [...] Is he to have a taste for any thing beyond that for shooting pheasants? is he to stagnate with no internal resources, and no power of making himself useful in life?'" (Newman to Hope-Scott, 28 Apr 1865, *L&D* XXI, p.453) In 1872 Allies wrote a very powerful case for the benefits that would accrue to Catholics and their schools by allowing them to go to Oxford and Cambridge. He argued that the universities' influence upon schools was unique because they had "the power to encourage study, and to draw forth latent ability, in every public and private school non-Catholic in England". It was suggested that "many Catholic natures need this stimulus". (M.H. Allies, *op. cit.*, pp.94–104)

16. He hoped that the second phase would provide a theological faculty so as to give episcopal influence its proper field of activity and scope. (Acton to Döllinger, 20 Jan 1861, Döllinger, *op. cit.* I, p.190)

17. Acton to Simpson, 1 Jan 1862, Acton, *Correspondence of Lord Acton and Richard Simpson* II, pp.247–8

University. Although "*practically* not a University", a sufficient number of boys from "Stonyhurst, Ushaw, Oscott, ourselves, and other places" would be enough to give it "a sort of University character".¹⁸ A college or university was certainly feasible "if only the great Catholic schools would interest themselves in the subject".¹⁹ Hope-Scott favoured the idea of a Catholic university and suggested Newman begin by establishing a centre for higher studies at Edgbaston.²⁰ Acton thought along similar lines.

The Edgbaston school is striking root, and the youths who complete their course so far as it extends will create both supply and demand: they will feel more than the others the want of a University education and they will furnish one necessary portion of the materials. Here is a basis and an opportunity for the growth of something like a Catholic University such as did not exist in Ireland.²¹

He offered first Newman, then Renouf,²² property and a library to begin, but without success.²³

In 'The work and the wants of the Catholic Church in England' Manning declared that a Catholic university was no Utopian dream, as "all the elements" were present in the English Catholic body which "naturally lead up to and demand a University for their completion". His enumeration of these elements, a list of Catholic schools and colleges in England, omitted the name of the Oratory School.²⁴ Despite the bold policy advocated

18. Newman to Acton, 24 Apr 1862, *L&D* XX, p.193

19. Newman to Wynne, 12 Sep 1862, *L&D* XX, p.270

20. Newman to Hope-Scott, 25 Sep 1867, XXIII, *L&D*, p.343 & Newman to Monsell, 6 Jul 1863, *L&D* XX, p.485

21. Acton to Renouf, 14 Nov 1862, Acton, *Selections from the correspondence of the first Lord Acton* II, p.163

22. Peter le Page Renouf (1822–97) was educated at Pembroke College, Oxford and came under the influence of the Tractarians. He became a Catholic in 1842 and, after teaching at Oscott and as a private tutor, became Professor of Ancient History and Geography at the Catholic University. After Newman's departure he hoped to take Catholic pupils at Oxford. In 1864 he became an inspector of Catholic schools.

23. Altholz, *op. cit.*, p.203 & MacDougall, *op. cit.*, p.20. In 1862 Acton consulted Newman on the university question as pressure was mounting for coverage of it in the *Home and Foreign Review*. In common with other Catholic journals it was expected to forge a policy and lobby for it. He had withheld an article that proposed the opening of Oxford to Catholics so as to give the scheme of a Catholic university precedence. (Acton to Newman, 5 Apr 1862, *L&D* XX, p.192)

24. The article appeared in the first issue of the *Dublin Review* (Jul 1863, pp.139–69) under W.G. Ward's editorship. (It is reprinted in Manning, *Miscellanies* I, London, 1877, pp.27–71.) The third want he listed was that of "of a higher literary and scientific education for our laymen — analogous, in fact to that furnished by the Protestant Universities". Manning listed four "greater colleges" — Stonyhurst, Oscott, Old Hall and Ushaw —and eight "lesser" ones — Sedgley Park, Mount St Mary's, St Edward's, Downside, Ratcliffe, St Beuno's, Beaumont Lodge and Ampleforth.

in print and his personal desire to find a solution, Manning's scheme was not adopted by Wiseman. Nor were others they discussed.²⁵ The difficulties of establishing a Catholic university appeared insuperable. In the absence of any lead from the hierarchy, attention focused on private initiatives.²⁶

In the mid-1850s the religious test barriers at Oxford and Cambridge were removed, except for the MA at Oxford. As access to the colleges was unaffected, only a few began to accept Catholics. Despite the small numbers, between 1863 and 1867 a heated debate raged in Catholic circles over the university question: it was focused on Oxford.²⁷ Catholics were agreed that Oxford (as well as Cambridge) presented a danger to the faith. The university was, after all, an Anglican seminary.²⁸ So long as the Protestant upper classes predominated, the atmosphere there was bound to be Protestant.²⁹ Nevertheless, the converts generally felt that the real danger was not exposure to High Church views but to intellectual liberalism. The Tractarian Movement, which most of them had supported, had arisen to combat the latter phenomenon. The dilemma that presented itself to this social group was that they wished their offspring to mix with the upper echelons of society, but without endangering their faith.

Many of the converts took their lead from Newman. He had concluded that the ideal solution, a Catholic university, was unworkable because of practical considerations and an increasing awareness that most Catholics were unable to understand a university

25. One such was a Catholic academy in Rome. Differing visions may once again have held back a plan: Wiseman conceived the academy "as an institution which should keep Catholics abreast of the science and literature of the hour"; Manning, "as an engine for infusing the Roman spirit into the cultivated laity". (Ward, *The life and times of Cardinal Wiseman* II, p.421)

26. In 1861 an experiment began at Cambridge where Paley opened a house for Catholics for whom he acted as private tutor. Ffoulkes undertook a more ambitious plan, a Catholic hall at Oxford.

Edmund Salusbury Ffoulkes (1819–94) was educated at Shrewsbury School and Jesus College, Oxford. He became a Fellow of Jesus and was vice-Principal from 1846 until 1854. The following year he became a Catholic.

27. In the first decade after this legislation about 20 Catholics passed through Oxford, and fewer through Cambridge. (Manning, 'The work and the wants', *Miscellanies* I, p.46)

28. In the first half of the nineteenth century one-half of Cambridge graduates and two-thirds of Oxford graduates went into Holy Orders. (M. Sanderson, *The universities in the nineteenth century*, ed. M. Sanderson, London, 1975, p.2)

29. Yet, as Monsell noted, "every atmosphere into which young men of station are likely to be thrown must be Protestant". (Monsell to Newman, 7 Jun 1863, *L&D* XX, p.467)

in his sense of the word.³⁰ The plan of a hall at Oxford had its own special drawbacks.³¹ "The best plan practically" was to continue "to suffer still young Catholics to go to Oxford" and to introduce a religious body "to counteract the irreligious spirit of the place".³² While acknowledging that Oxford was dangerous for young men, Newman argued that it was barely more so than Woolwich or London: the advisability of attendance depended on individual circumstances. Thus he was equally against a general prohibition on Catholics going there, as it would be too great a trial of obedience to some parents, as he was against a positive and general permission.³³

The prevailing ecclesiastical view was that attendance at the old universities could not be justified, as the intellectual atmosphere and the social nature of undergraduate life would render all safeguards useless. The view was fortified by the strong stance of highly influential converts such as Manning, Talbot, W.G. Ward and the London Oratorians.³⁴ Many of the educated laity, particularly converts, inclined to the contrary opinion; that full entry into the life of the nation could justify the risk, provided suitable precautions were taken. At their Low Week meeting in 1864, the bishops decided three things: to reject Ffoulkes's Oxford hall project;³⁵ that the Catholic university scheme was

30. Newman divulged his reservations to Rogers. (Rogers to Lady Rogers, 1 Sep 1863, Rogers, *op. cit.*, p.247)

31. While it had the merit of securing a liberal education, it was foreseen that measures to safeguard faith and morals would make it "so isolated as not to have the influx of Oxford opinions", and would encourage Catholics to opt instead for the colleges. It was possible that either "Catholics in Oxford will be too few, and then despised, or many and then feared and hated". (Newman to St John, 26 Aug 1863, *L&D XX*, p.512) Apart from these difficulties, the scheme was unlikely to gain ecclesiastical approval.

32. Newman added these comments to an autograph (Newman to St John, 26 Aug 1863, *L&D XX*, p.512) in 1875.

33. Newman to Sheil, 22 Mar 1867, *L&D XXIII*, p.101; Newman's memorandum on allowing Catholics to go to the universities, 21 Apr 1867, *L&D XXIII*, pp.180-1. He admitted that the provision of a strong Catholic presence in Oxford would be considered by many parents as "a pledge that their children would be protected against the scepticism and infidelity which too notoriously prevail there just now". (Newman to Jenkins, 12 Dec 1867, *L&D XXIII*, p.383)

34. In 'The works and the wants of the Catholic Church in England', Manning devotes three pages to arguments for allowing Catholics to go to Oxford, and 11 pages to arguments against. ('The work and the wants', *Miscellanies I*, pp.47-60)

35. Although only an MA could open a private hall, the Rector of Lincoln had offered to assist Ffoulkes by sponsoring a hall exclusively for Catholics. Ffoulkes wanted Newman to join his organising committee which drew mainly from the Catholic aristocracy, but Newman declined to give the scheme any public support. (Pattison to Ffoulkes, 5 Apr 1863, *L&D XX*, p.429n) Hope-Scott agreed to serve on the committee. Later Ffoulkes asked Newman for addresses of school parents who were likely to support his scheme, but Newman refused to supply them. (Newman to Ffoulkes, 11 Oct 1863, *L&D XX*, p.535)

impractical; and that the clergy should dissuade Catholic parents from sending their sons to the universities.³⁶ In August, Ullathorne offered the Catholic mission at Oxford to Newman, who had recently been considering the feasibility of a Catholic hall or college. Newman sought the advice of friends and received a range of responses. Gaisford backed the plan for a Catholic hall; Hope-Scott urged him to tread cautiously and to begin with private houses for a tutor and students, in order to test the principle; and Scott-Murray revealed his preference for sending his sons to Christ Church rather than a Catholic hall.³⁷ Newman decided to follow Hope-Scott's advice. However, Ullathorne informed Newman he would only countenance the plan for an Oratory.³⁸

In response to Manning's appeal for an instruction to prevent more Catholics going to the universities, Rome ordered the bishops to meet. Prior to the meeting, a tendentious questionnaire was sent to several graduate converts, but not to Newman.³⁹ At the bishops' meeting in December two favoured an outright ban on attendance at the universities, while the others favoured a warning on the dangers of attendance.⁴⁰ Married converts like Allies felt that the bishops were unsympathetic to their predicament owing to their lack of appreciation of the value of a university education.⁴¹ The converts' reaction to this educational problem was reminiscent of the school foundation. Keenly aware of their parental duties and responsibilities, they were eager not to forfeit for their sons an education that would provide access to national life. Gaisford complained to

36. Norman, *op. cit.*, p.294

37. Hope-Scott to Newman, 18 Aug 1864 & Newman to Hope-Scott, 21 Aug 1864, *L&D* XXI, pp.203–4. Newman had just been given the option on a large site in central Oxford and the offer coincided with his wish to start an Oratory there.

38. He reminded Newman that he had once joined the Irish bishops in asking for a warning on attendance at Oxford and Cambridge when the Catholic University was being founded. (Newman's memorandum, 21 Sep 1864, *L&D* XXI, p.232)

39. Newman thought it could be summed up in just one question: "Are you or are you not one of those wicked men who advocate Oxford education?" (Newman to Gaisford, 16 Dec 1864, *L&D* XXI, p.343)

40. Ker, *Newman: a biography*, pp.565–7. Newman suspected that "Manning will decide [the matter], I think, [for] both the Pope and the Cardinal; that is, unless the Catholic laity through England express strongly an opposite view". (Newman to Bellasis, 24 Jan 1864, *L&D* XXI, p.28)

41. As none of the thirteen bishops advising the Holy See on the Oxford question had had an English university education, Allies considered them ill-equipped to judge its effect on the mind. "How many of them care sufficiently for mental culture to give an adequate consideration to the motives determining parents to send their sons to Oxford?", he asked. (Allies to Newman, 3 Dec 1864, *L&D* XXI p.327n)

Bishop Grant⁴² that the questionnaire had been framed unfairly. He declared that, on becoming a Catholic, perhaps his hardest cross was the thought that his son would lose the advantage of a public-school and university education. Catholics were not accepted in London society because of their different background. The dangers of Oxford were less than elsewhere: "the bane of the old Catholics has been lying about idle at their parents' houses, or lounging on the Continent". As legislation had opened up Oxford, he was determined to send his son there if provision could be made for religious instruction and spiritual direction. An Oratory in charge of the Oxford mission promised just this. Gaisford declared himself responsible for ensuring that his son was brought up, firstly, as a Catholic Christian, and secondly, as an English gentleman. He declared he was willing to take advice from wiser men but would not shrink from this responsibility.⁴³

Others were acting individually or collectively. Bellasis, who was wintering in Rome, began to lobby energetically against a positive prohibition and encourage others to do likewise.⁴⁴ He called on Barnabò, Neve⁴⁵ and Talbot. Simeon assembled a meeting of laymen, the majority of whom were connected with the school, to draw up an address to Propaganda.⁴⁶ To succeed it was necessary to widen the base, as in the school foundation, and to gain signatures of old Catholics.⁴⁷ It was presented in Rome by Bellasis and Wetherell.⁴⁸ The laymen also began searching for a permanent representative in Rome who could lobby on their behalf. Newman's scope for involvement was severely restricted on account of his earlier policy and connection with the Catholic University. He

42. Thomas Grant (1816–70) was educated at Ushaw and the English College, Rome. He was ordained in 1841 and became secretary to Cardinal Acton. In 1844 he became Rector of the English College, Rome and in 1851 the first bishop of Southwark.

43. Gaisford to Grant, 11 Dec 1864, *L&D XXI*, pp.510–12

44. Bellasis, *Memorials of Mr Serjeant Bellasis*, p.194

45. Frederick Robert Neve (1806–86) was educated at Eton and Oriel College, Oxford. He became a Catholic in 1845 and was ordained a priest. He became Rector of the English College, Rome in 1863 but was forced to resign, partly because he sympathised with Newman's views.

46. The address expressed the hope that it would not be necessary for Rome to interfere actively in the matter, as it was presumed that the safeguards of the Church were sufficient and that all were conscious of their serious responsibility for the faith and morals of their sons. The meeting took place at Lord Castlerosse's on 7 January 1865. Present were Lords Castlerosse and Norreys, Weld Blundell, Scott-Murray, Allies, Pollen, Wetherell, Renouf and Simeon. Gaisford, Towneley and Monsell were absent. Nine of the twelve were school parents or promoters. (Simeon to Newman, 9 Jan 1865, *L&D XXI*, p.379n)

47. *L&D XXI*, p.397n

48. McClelland, *English Roman Catholics and higher education*, p.215

felt the question was one which the laity ought to face squarely, as the initiative would be more effective if it came from those who were immediately involved in the decision.⁴⁹ St John conveyed this view to the many school parents who expressed to him the wish for provision for Catholics at Oxford.⁵⁰

In February 1865 Propaganda ordered the bishops to dissuade Catholics from attendance at non-Catholic universities: the bishops directed their clergy to advise the laity accordingly.⁵¹ Newman concluded that "no School, as ourselves, can educate with a professed view to Oxford"; or indeed London University or Trinity College, Dublin. From his interpretation of the directive it was evident "1. that each case of going to Oxford is to be taken by itself. 2. that leave is to be asked by parents in the *Confessional*."⁵² Newman regretted the unfortunate consequence, that the directive hit hardest at the only school attempting to educate Catholic boys in a way that would enable them to cope with Oxford.⁵³ School parents were also alive to the need for preparation

49. Newman congratulated Simeon on the lay address, as he felt "the expression of opinion and initiative in action must come directly from the Laity". (Newman to Simeon, 9 Jan 1865, *L&D* XXI, p.379)

50. St John to Newman, 1 Jan 1865, *L&D* XXI, p.367n

51. Ullathorne sent his clergy a copy of the bishops' decision on 24 March 1864. "The Bishops are unanimous in their disapproval of the establishing a Catholic College at any of the Protestant Universities. And they are further of opinion that Parents ought to be in every way dissuaded from sending their children to pursue their studies at such Universities." In forming their judgement, the bishops "were guided by those principles which the Church has ever maintained in the matter of education". (*L&D* XXI, p.440n)

52. Newman to Pollen, 31 Mar 1865, *L&D* XXI, p.441. In McClelland's judgement Newman complied with Propaganda's instruction while ignoring its spirit. (McClelland, *English Roman Catholics and higher education*, p.227) In fact Newman anticipated that youths going to Oxford would be ignored, as Manning would be preoccupied with the education of the clergy and the poor, and therefore unable to provide an alternative. (Newman to Monsell, 28 May 1865, *L&D* XXI, p.477) After the instruction, Newman began telling parents he could take no direct part in sending their sons to Oxford and he refused to obtain introductions or provide references. (Newman to Weguelin, 29 Jul 1866, *L&D* XXII, p.272) Newman explained that "the appearance of having in some respect adopted a shuffling course" was due to being pulled in opposite directions, by his duty of obedience and his private judgement. "Thus, as to youths going to Oxford, a parent may never have spoken to me on the subject, much less asked my advice, I may not know him or his son, whom he has sent to Oxford — that son may be going on well there — he may have got honours — I may judge from his career that he has gained very much good, and no harm, from being there, and, since I have ever felt that there *are* those who will gain good from going there, I may be glad he has gone there. Now, suppose I express this satisfaction, it is easy and obvious for a hearer to assert that I am 'disobedient', I am going against authority, as approving that which authority has discountenanced." (Newman's memorandum about April 1867, 5 Sep 1867, *L&D* XXIII, p.332)

53. Newman agreed with Ornsby that on "Catholic boys, educated as Catholics educate them, Oxford life will not act happily — but it *ought* not to be so, and we trust we are educating our own boys here in a better way". (Newman to Ornsby, 6 Jul 1863, *L&D* XX, p.486) Newman's strategy undoubtedly benefitted from his own experience. On going up to Oxford in 1817 he had been warned of the dangers there by his former teacher, Mayers. Mayers also wrote to Newman encouraging him to stand firm amidst the dissipation of

for undergraduate life.⁵⁴

Newman was again offered the Oxford mission and, in August 1866, accepted on condition that the warning against Oxford would not be strengthened. Propaganda sanctioned the proposal — an Oxford Oratory dependent on the Birmingham Oratory — with its own provisos. One of them — that Newman should not reside in Oxford — was withheld by Ullathorne as he hoped to get it rescinded. The ‘secret instruction’ had been deemed necessary as Newman’s presence in Oxford was expected to attract Catholics, thereby nullifying the Rescript of 1865. The intention was to grant Newman sufficient scope to influence Protestants there, but not enough to attract Catholics. Friends of Newman launched an appeal for the new church. Money was pledged, mainly from the school promoters, and a circular was sent out.⁵⁵ Newman’s own preparations were well under way when the secret instruction was leaked to the press in April 1867. In August, Newman allowed the plan to lapse. Later that month Propaganda declared that Catholics sending their sons to the national universities would be guilty of exposing them to a proximate occasion of grave sin. The bishops were charged to communicate the decision through pastoral letters.⁵⁶

student life and to be prepared to endure ridicule for doing so. (Culler, *op. cit.*, pp.5–6)

54. Thynne asked if his son could be given some idea how "our religion is controverted by Protestants and how to meet their arguments". (Thynne to Newman, n.d. [Jan 1865], *L&D* XXI, p.379n) Before the old Etonian became a Catholic, his concern for religious education was evident in enquiring about the suitability of Radley, just before it was founded, for his nine-year-old son. (C. Hibbert, *No ordinary place: Radley College and the public school system, 1847–1997*, London, 1997, p.32) Ward later consulted Newman about whether he should prevent his son Richard from taking up his place at Oxford. After cataloguing the dangers, Newman assured him that "a religious youth has all necessary safeguards, if he will avail himself of them". His selection of friends at the start was crucially important. (Newman to F.R. Ward, 27 Jan 1867, *L&D* XXIII, p.39)

55. Gaisford led the initiative as Hope-Scott and Bellasis were wintering far away, at Hyères. The circular listed 20 names and the sums they had subscribed. Out of a total of £2195, the contribution from school promoters and parents came to £1810 — Hope-Scott £1000; Gaisford £200; the Duke of Norfolk, Monsell, Bellasis, Monteith and Simeon £100 each; F.R. Ward and Hardman £50 each; Pollen £10. (*L&D* XXIII, pp.20–1n)

56. In May the English bishops had informed Propaganda that they were opposed to an explicit ban on Oxford for two reasons: it would create difficulties for those who converted at the university, and it would encourage parents to send their sons to Protestant tutors for preparation, given that the Catholic schools would be unable to do so. Manning had pushed for a stronger line. (Ker, *Newman: a biography*, p.613) In 1871 the Jesuits opened a mission in Oxford, but in 1885 the warning about Catholic attendance was repeated. The policy was finally reversed in 1895. Although there had been mounting pressure from the laity, the reason for the change was the assessment that conditions at the universities had changed. Catholic residence was now possible as the moral condition had improved and the Anglican monopoly had been broken.

Anxious parents asked Newman for guidance in interpreting the strictures. Newman's replies showed his deep sympathy for the aspirations of youth. He explained that the declaration was not a prohibition but the gravest of warnings, thus a general rule admitting exceptions for very strong reasons.

It does not do to beat the life out of a youth — the life of aspiration, excitement and enthusiasm. Older men live by reason, habit and self-control, but the young by visions. I can fancy cases in which Oxford would be the salvation of a youth; when he would be far more likely to rise up against authority, murmur against his superiors, and (more) to become an unbeliever, if he is kept from Oxford than if he is sent there.⁵⁷

The goal of Oxford might be the sole motivation for a youth to work, and avoid idleness and despondency. "It may make all the difference between his being a useful member of society through life and employing his talents to God's glory, or not".⁵⁸

Newman pondered the implications for the school. He considered lowering the upper age to 14 or 16 to avoid the unresolved university problem and to emphasise its care of young boys.⁵⁹ Instead, under the guidance of Hope-Scott, the school continued on its former course, while an addition to the prospectus stated that, in accordance with their bishop's pastoral, "there is no preparation provided for the examinations at Oxford and Cambridge".⁶⁰ One remedy to the impasse, suggested by Hope-Scott, was to begin a centre of higher studies at Rednal. The scheme was carefully considered but dismissed for want of a suitable tutor and the expense.⁶¹

The Grissell Papers contain lists of Catholics who matriculated at Oxford before 1895.⁶² Of the 47 Catholics who matriculated in the period 1867–87, 14 were from the Oratory School. Beaumont, Oscott and Woburn each supplied three and Ushaw one. From

57. Newman to Lady Simeon, 10 Nov 1867, *L&D* XXIII, pp.365–6

58. Newman to Simeon, 9 Dec 1867, *L&D* XXIII, p.381

59. Alternatively, Newman thought that the school could anticipate the lower age limit, without committing itself, by stating in the prospectus "that no boy is received at the Oratory School, who is intended by his parents for the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge". (Newman to Hope-Scott, 9 Sep 1867, *L&D* XXIII, p.335)

60. School prospectus, n.d. [1867], BOA. Ullathorne's pastoral letter was dated 13 October 1867.

61. There were five eligible boys who could form the nucleus, but it implied fees of £150–£200 each. (Newman to Hope-Scott, 17 Aug 1867, *L&D* XXIII, p.304)

62. Grissell Papers, Ampleforth archives, JX 24–1

this McClelland concludes: "Apart from Newman's school, there appears to have been no *organized* attempt on the part of the Colleges to defy the hierarchy".⁶³ From this deduction and the premise that there was no need for Oxford and Cambridge, since professional education was available elsewhere, McClelland reaches his familiar conclusion: that Newman was merely concerned with "the social needs of a handful of titled, ennobled or wealthy families".⁶⁴

Newman was given a frank appraisal of the dangers at Oxford by an ex-master who sent news of two former pupils at Christ Church. Arnold judged that, to the extent that they worked hard, they were brought into contact with influences that would sap their faith. "The chief mischief, and a real one, is the *discontinuity* in their education which is involved in capping the edifice begun at home and carried on at the Oratory [School] with a Christ Church coping stone. At the Oratory [School] all was work, order, and duty; at Ch. Ch. all is plenty, license, and amusement. It is not the Protestantism but the idleness of Oxford that is to be dreaded for them."⁶⁵

Propaganda pressed the English bishops to consider establishing a Catholic university and in 1871 a sub-commission was authorised to investigate prospects.⁶⁶ Newman was among the 800 invited to respond to a questionnaire. As with the 1858 questionnaire about the school, Newman found himself unable to do so fully on account

63. He adds that Stonyhurst was thoroughly loyal to the hierarchy, yet comparison with the *Stonyhurst lists, 1784-1886* (Stonyhurst, 1886) reveals that at least four ex-pupils were among the 47 names. (*English Roman Catholics and higher education*, p.338) Most of the 14 boys probably did not go directly from the Oratory School to Oxford. Before the 1867 ruling, three boys had gone via Darnell and three others via Protestant tutors. (Newman to Hope-Scott, 9 Sep 1867, *L&D* XXIII, p.334)

64. *English Roman Catholics and higher education*, p.339. Only three of the 14 boys (who went from the Oratory School to Oxford) fit McClelland's description. He omits that, of the 116 Catholics listed who matriculated between 1888 and 1899, only 15 were from the Oratory School. (Grissell Papers, Ampleforth archives, JX 24-1) James Hope (Lord Rankeillour), the only son of Hope-Scott, was, exceptionally, given permission by the bishop of Southwark. (Evennett, 'Catholics and the universities, 1850-1950', p.306) The names and colleges given in the Grissell Papers match very closely with the data given in Mohnen's research on pupils from the Oratory School. According to Mohnen, five pupils went to Cambridge. (Mohnen, *op. cit.*, pp.323-55 — in the German original, not Tinkel's translation)

65. Arnold to Newman, 2 Feb 1868, Arnold, *Letters of Thomas Arnold the younger*, pp.162-3

66. It was appointed at a meeting of bishops, heads of colleges and schools, and superiors of religious orders, and instructed to obtain information about the actual state of higher education and its needs. The members were Hutton (President, Ratcliffe), Northcote (President, Oscott), Purbrick (Rector, Stonyhurst), Sweeney (St John's Priory, Bath) and Wilkinson (Ushaw).

of differing fundamental assumptions about the nature of education. The first question asked whether there were any perceived deficiencies in the provision of liberal education for "young Catholic laymen of the higher classes". Newman answered that there was no provision, as no university education was available. He invited the sub-commission to reflect on the nature of university education by considering what school education provided:

Parents send their sons to school because they are in the way, because home instruction is expensive, in order that there may be method in their instruction, — that they may be submitted to discipline — that they may have the stimulus of emulation — and that they may be introduced into the society of their equals, both as a moral preparation for the world, and a formation of character, and also as a means of making acquaintances and friendships which may last through life.⁶⁷

The replies to the questionnaire were most revealing. They showed that, unlike the committee or the bishops, there was close agreement among "the *laity* whom it most concerns". After an Oxford or Cambridge college, the next most acceptable proposal was for a centre of higher studies under Newman; "to turn your present *school* into a College for such a purpose exclusively". Newman thought the proposal was "simply impossible".⁶⁸ Eventually Manning's scheme was adopted. The Catholic University College was opened at Kensington in 1875 but it only survived until 1882, for a variety of reasons: Manning's choice of Capel⁶⁹ as Rector was unfortunate;⁷⁰ the Jesuits gave it no support; the bishops showed little interest after its foundation; Newman turned down Manning's invitation to participate;⁷¹ the laity preferred Oxford and Cambridge to

67. Newman to Northcote, 23 Feb 1872, *L&D* XXVI, pp.25–7

68. Northcote to Newman, 28 Feb & 25 Mar 1872; Newman to Northcote, 25 Mar 1872, *L&D* XXVI, pp.34n, 49 & 50n

69. Thomas John Capel (1836–1911) was educated by a priest at Hastings and at St Mary's Training College, Hammersmith where he went on to become vice-Principal. In 1867 he was chaplain to Scott-Murray at Danesfield. During 1868 and 1869 he tutored at Oxford. He was a prominent figure in London society where he made converts and, for a time, was private chaplain to Lord Bute. He was made a Papal Chamberlain by Pius IX.

70. He was an incompetent administrator and was forced to resign in 1878. In 1882 Manning suspended Capel from priestly duties for grave moral reasons.

71. It is Norman's assessment that Newman's instincts were correct in doing so. Manning and Newman had different ideas of a university. Manning hoped for "a middle-class, technical, and scientific institute". Newman doubted if an adequate level of intellectual freedom would be tolerated, and anticipated that the laity would not be given effective control. (Norman, *op. cit.*, pp.270–1 & 299)

Kensington.⁷²

Opposition to Newman, his convert friends and their school

The rejection of the Oxford hall scheme, resistance to the plan for an Oxford Oratory, and the ban on attendance at the universities were all indications of the prevailing winds. Rome discountenanced mixed education, and, under Wiseman and Manning, the policy was resolutely implemented. It was in this climate that a campaign of opposition to the school arose, with deleterious effects on its fortunes. The perceived allegiances of Newman caused the school to become a serviceable target for those with strong Ultramontane views. Newman's reaction was to lie low, to let the storm blow over and to allow the truth to prevail. He was reluctant to counteract tales told about the school, but circumstances finally forced him to do so.

Initially opposition took the "shape of prophecy". It was said, and by priests, that although the Oratory could give intellectual training, it was unsuitable for the religious and moral training of boys.⁷³ In a reference to the dame system, it was reported that women were to be allowed into the Oratory building — a scandal for a religious house. Such stories were circulated to ridicule arrangements even before the school had begun.⁷⁴ Some opposition emanated from the London Oratory, reflecting both its Ultramontanism and the contention that it was against the Oratorian Rule to run a school.⁷⁵

Gossip and idle tales fed off all aspects of the school: disputes among the staff,

72. Thirty laymen were initially invited to become members of the Academical Senate: nine from the aristocracy, eight from the gentry, seven from the learned professions and six from commerce. Seven others were added. Of the 37, three were intimately connected with the school foundation — Allies, Pollen and Scott-Murray — and three were school parents or supporters — Charlton, Hardman and S.N. Stokes. They fitted the above-mentioned categories in the ratio 1:1:3:1. Of the 13 ecclesiastics invited, apart from Newman, only Macmullen had an Oratory School connection. (McClelland, *English Roman Catholics and higher education*, pp.281–4)

73. To counter these allegations, Bellasis suggested either issuing a circular or following up St John's idea to publish Newman's catechetical classes. (Bellasis to St John, 7 Nov 1862, BOA)

74. Newman's memorandum on the Oratory School, 30 Mar 1867, *L&D* XXIII, pp.115–16

75. Newman noted the "thousand whisperings against me at the London Oratory, which have succeeded in prejudicing the Catholic body to a great extent against me". The "suspicious & calumnies [...] since we began the School, have been both increased, and directed against it". (Newman's autobiographical memoir, 21 Jan 1863, *Autobiographical writings*, p.256)

misdeemeanours of boys, and arrangements. The circulation of damaging stories has always attended educational establishments, especially new ones, but in the case of the school they were particularly virulent: in the extent to which the exaggerated accounts and falsehoods were persistently repeated, despite the explanations provided; in the way they were embroidered; and in the people who cooperated in their circulation. It was said that the boys were allowed out into Birmingham unaccompanied.⁷⁶ Later it was alleged that they went to public houses, dancing rooms and even brothels. The boys were said to swear. Later it was said they were so profane that, instead of saying a man 'swore like a trooper', he would say, he 'swore like an Edgbastonian'. Birmingham was bad for the morals of the boys. Later it was said to be bad for their health too, and that, in comparison to the Oscott boys, they were puny and unhealthy.⁷⁷

The gossip had the effect of "frightening people with the suspicion of our being crypto-heretics".⁷⁸ A worried mother wrote to Mrs Wootten for reassurance that the school was not to be closed because of links with liberal Catholics.⁷⁹ She had heard rumours of excommunication and schism from "very high authority" and was understandably "in a nervous state", having three boys at the school.⁸⁰ It was partly with a view to protecting the school that Newman decided to distance himself from the liberal Catholics and their publications.⁸¹ Doubts about the school at the outset, due to Newman's supposed incompetency in organisational affairs — illustrated by Oratorian

76. The 1861 prospectus (BOA) stated: "the boys are absolutely forbidden to enter the adjacent town, unless under special circumstances", for which they required written permission. Newman frequently had to deny the lie that boys were allowed into Birmingham without a master. (Newman to Miss Holmes, 5 Aug 1861, *L&D* XX, p.23)

77. Information came from Mrs Hornyhold and W. Wilberforce. (St John to Newman, 4 Jan 1863, *L&D* XX, p.386n & Newman to St John, 30 Jul 1862, *L&D* XX, p.247) The calumny was summarised in Newman's memorandum on the Oratory School that St John took to Rome. (30 Mar 1867, *L&D* XXIII, p.114–18) The comparison with Oscott boys may have originated from Moody. (Moody's diary, 2 Feb 1862, BOA)

78. Newman to St John, 25 Oct 1862, *L&D* XX, p.328

79. The *Rambler* had become the outlet for the German school of historical criticism because of Acton's links with its most representative figure, Döllinger. Manning had asked Propaganda in 1862 to include the *Rambler* on the Index because of the principles which inspired it — a semi-rationalist approach to faith. (J. Pereiro, *Cardinal Manning: an intellectual biography*, Oxford, 1998, pp.201–4)

80. Mrs Charlton referred to "ideas bordering on German Rationalism" in the *Home and Foreign Review*. "A nasty party is chuckling over the total overthrow of Edgbaston in consequence". (Mrs Charlton to Mrs Wootten, 22 Oct 1862, *L&D* XX, pp.322–3n)

81. Newman to Bellasis, 24 Oct 1862 & Bellasis to Newman, 26 Oct 1862, *L&D* XX, p.322

disputes and the 'failure' of the Catholic University — were seemingly confirmed by the Darnell affair.⁸² It was presumed that the school would soon collapse.⁸³

Norman has described Newman at the time as "an isolated figure [...] at the periphery of the institutional Church".⁸⁴ His influence among converts was undermined by the opposition and distrust of other converts.⁸⁵ He found little support for himself and the school among the bishops, other than from Ullathorne. Bishop T. Brown repeated the story that the school was unacceptable because, being modelled on Eton, it allowed the boys to roam around town.⁸⁶ Bishop J. Brown maintained that religion was not taught properly and that its spirit was not Catholic.⁸⁷ Bishop Grant circulated "quite atrocious things of our school" which he repeated in spite of being given explanations to the contrary.⁸⁸ It was clear to Newman that the "continual cannonadings" meant that the school, while flourishing internally, showed no external signs of success.⁸⁹

Under Wiseman episcopal policy was to maintain cordial relations with Newman but to keep him out of all schemes involving tertiary education. However, in so far as the school prepared boys for Oxford, it became implicated.⁹⁰ Newman reckoned that even a little episcopal support would have brought the extra 10–20 boys needed to break even.

82. The crisis showed Newman's "singular incapacity for government", according to Moody. (Moody's diary, 4 Mar 1862, BOA) For Simpson, it represented the "destruction of the last refuge of the would be believers in Newman's practical ability". He hoped Newman would "give up attempting to rule men by his command, instead of exerting an almost omnipotent influence over them by his teaching". (Simpson to Acton, 4 Jan 1862, Acton, *Correspondence of Lord Acton and Richard Simpson II*, p.249)

83. This conviction was shared in conversation by Blennerhassett, Coffin, Moody and Oxenham. (Moody's diary, 4 Mar & 13 Jul 1862, BOA)

84. Norman, *op. cit.*, p.313

85. Newman, *Autobiographical writings*, p.257

86. Newman to St John, 30 Jul 1862, *L&D XX*, p.247

87. This information came from Bellasis. (St John to Newman, 16 Oct 1862, *L&D XX*, p.313n)

88. Newman to Monsell, 8 Oct 1863, *L&D XX*, p.534

89. Newman to Bellasis, 19 Oct 1862, *L&D XX*, p.314 & Newman to Miss Holmes, 20 Nov 1863, *L&D XX*, p.560

90. Ullathorne revealed their policy to St John. (St John's memorandum, Apr 1865, *L&D XXI*, p.449n) Pollen told Newman that the school was one reason for the ruling on Oxford. (Pollen to Newman, 1 Apr 1865, *L&D XXI*, p.443n) However, it seems that Wiseman considered Newman the person to begin a Catholic university in England and that he wished the nucleus of one could be formed at Edgbaston instead of the school. (Bellasis to Newman, 23 Apr 1864, *L&D XXI*, p.98n)

Unlike the bishops, Manning chose to ignore the school.⁹¹ Its glaring omission from his enumeration of Catholic schools in England was either a deliberate oversight to avoid giving the school any "public echo",⁹² or an indication that Manning had brought himself to think of it as a temporary measure; "that the School had been opened to gratify a whim of a generation of converts [...] and which would in the natural course of events pass with their passing".⁹³ Alternatively, it is conceivable that Manning saw the school as part of another system of education, alien to the college system, and thus not part of the substructure of his university system. But for his distrust of Newman's ideas, Manning ought to have favoured the school since he viewed the dismantlement of mixed education as a step towards his abiding aim — the improvement of clerical education.⁹⁴ With Manning's appointment at Westminster in 1865 Newman sensed a new danger for the school: uncertainty that a large-scale reorganisation of Catholic education was in the offing in which the school or Newman would be required to take part.⁹⁵ This suspicion created uncertainty and hindered further investment in the school. In the summer of 1866 Cardinal Reisach, Prefect of the Congregation of Studies, made a visit to England. After he returned, Manning told Talbot: "he has seen and *understands* all that is going on in England".⁹⁶ Reisach had stayed three days with W.G. Ward and had visited Oscott. He had seen neither Newman nor the school.⁹⁷

91. Newman thought that if Manning really wanted to do the Oratory a service, "he would simply speak a good word for our *School*". (Newman to Monsell, 18 Jun 1865 *L&D* XXI p.499 & Newman to St John, 26 Aug 1863, *L&D* XX, p & 512)

92. Mohnen, *op. cit.*, p.78. Kelly judges that the omission had "all the appearances of being calculated". (E. Kelly, 'The Apologia and the Ultramontanes', *Newman's Apologia: a classic reconsidered*, ed. V.F. Blehl & F.X. Connolly, New York, 1964, p.28)

93. Tristram, 'The Oratory School', Feb 1933, p.27. This interpretation is suggested by a comment of Manning's head Oblate at Bayswater who once referred to the temporary nature of the school. (Newman to Hope-Scott, 9 Sep 1867, *L&D* XXIII, p.335)

94. This was the first and greatest of his 'work and wants'. (*Miscellanies* I, p.43) Manning's stance reflected his conviction that Newman lacked the Catholic spirit, as he had not acquired Catholic instincts. (Pereiro, *op. cit.*, pp.230-2 & 244)

95. Newman to Monsell, 18 Jun 1865, *L&D* XXI, p.499. It was later envisaged "to submit all Catholic schools of a certain rank to a yearly examinations by a Catholic Board". It was unclear whether this would affect whole schools or just the higher classes. (Allies to Northcote, 13 May 1876, quoted by McClelland, *English Roman Catholics and higher education*, p.310)

96. Manning to Talbot, Aug 1866, Purcell, *op. cit.* II, p.314n

97. Trevor claims that Reisach was commissioned to inquire into the state of Catholic education in England and that the visit was rigged to present a picture of uniformity and agreement. (Trevor, *Light in winter*, pp.387-8) McClelland has disproved this claim: Manning asked Ullathorne to bring Newman to meet Reisach at Oscott. Given Reisach's office, McClelland's claim that the trip was a private visit to Coffin and

Newman's reputation in Rome was sullied after his *Rambler* article of July 1859 was delated for heresy. Years later Talbot continued to fan the flames and cite it as having encouraged the laity in a wish "to govern the Church in England by public opinion".⁹⁸ Talbot⁹⁹ was Manning's agent in Rome and together with Vaughan¹⁰⁰ furthered the cause of the Roman party with stories against Newman: that he had twice refused to see the Pope; that he contributed money to the cause of Garibaldi;¹⁰¹ and that he was associated with a dangerous party in England. Vaughan told the Pope that Newman, being the representative of the liberal and national school of thought, was unreliable.¹⁰² In 1867 complaints from Grant and Talbot reached Propaganda that Catholics at Oxford had made a shipwreck of their faith and morals, and that, meanwhile, Newman was preparing boys for Oxford at his school, in defiance of papal policy.¹⁰³

While Newman was busy preparing to establish an Oratory in Oxford, blissfully unaware of the secret instruction to keep him out, Barnabò wrote to complain that he was "actively preparing a number of youths" for Oxford, and doing so in spite of the declarations of the Holy See that it was imprudent. He added that the Pope was upset at the "recent unhappy perversion" of Catholics at Oxford. The upshot was that the Pope had asked for the bishops to meet about the matter, and for Newman "to abstain altogether from any activity or deed which may have the appearance of directly or indirectly

Ward is not entirely convincing. Reisach's guide was Coffin, who had left the Birmingham Oratory because he considered its educational policy misguided. (McClelland, *English Roman Catholics and higher education*, pp.220–1)

98. Talbot to Manning, 25 Apr 1867, Purcell, *op. cit.* II, pp.317–18. Talbot also tried to get Newman's sermon 'The Pope and the Revolution' put on the Index. (St John to Newman, 2 May 1867, *L&D* XXIII, p.209)

99. George Talbot (1816–86) was the fifth son of the third Baron Talbot. He was educated at Eton and St Mary's Hall, Oxford. He became a Catholic in 1842 and was ordained in 1846. He applied to join the Birmingham Oratory but was turned down. Through Wiseman's influence he was appointed a canon and a Papal Chamberlain.

100. Herbert Vaughan (1832–1903) was vice-President of St Edmund's, Ware from 1857 to 1861. He began working closely with Manning when he was appointed Archbishop of Westminster. He became Bishop of Salford in 1872 and succeeded Manning in 1892.

101. Newman to St John, 1 Jan 1867, *L&D* XXIII, p.3

102. Vaughan to Manning, 10 Apr 1867, *L&D* XXIII, p.137n

103. *L&D* XXIII, p.89n. In fact the Pope already knew that boys from the school aspired to Oxford. In an audience with him in 1864 two boys had revealed their wish to go to Oxford. (Tristram, 'The Oratory School', May 1933, pp.67–9) These may have been Bellasis's sons.

favouring the entry of Catholic youth" to Oxford.¹⁰⁴ In answer to the request for an explanation, Newman stated: that only two boys were being prepared for Oxford, one at the insistence of his father, the other sent by a bishop in New Zealand; that he understood the matter had been left by the bishops to the prudent discretion of confessors — in some cases to dissuade, in others to provide safeguards, sometimes reluctantly acquiescing, where parents were rashly but obstinately determined; that he had heard of no loss of faith at Oxford;¹⁰⁵ and that the Oratory School was only doing as Oscott and Stonyhurst were, by preparing for Oxford.¹⁰⁶ He promised to obey, while expressing surprise "that, after my twenty years of most faithful service, your Eminence reposes so little confidence in me in the matter".¹⁰⁷

Sheil felt it was "lamentable that the Propaganda should interfere in a matter so political and so English as education". The ruling was depressing because it seemed to indicate how blind Propaganda was to the insignificant position of English Catholics, and to "how unfit they are to come forward in public life, how unable to impart the least benefit to their co-religionists" due to their incomplete education. "I assume to myself an absolute independence in the management of my secular affairs, in which I include education: my son shall learn fractions and Greek Grammar where and under whom I choose". He felt that Propaganda might just as well dictate that, because of dangers to faith and morals, his sons could not be soldiers or lawyers.¹⁰⁸

Ullathorne revealed to Newman that there had been a strong remonstrance from Grant, Manning and Talbot after Propaganda had granted permission for an Oratory in Oxford, and that Vaughan, among others, spoke in Rome about Newman having

104. Barnabò to Newman, 11 Mar 1867, *L&D* XXIII, p.91

105. Newman thought that the evidence for Catholics going astray had been exaggerated: an ex-Stonyhurst undergraduate at Christ Church had "ducked a Puseyite in Mercury" (the fountain in Tom Quad); and an Oscottian in Rome had spoken loosely about the Pope's temporal power. (Newman to Hope-Scott & Bellasis, 20 Mar 1867, *L&D* XXIII, p.88) St John heard a different version in Rome. The first had accumulated debts of £7000 and run off with an actress. (St John to Newman, 4 May 1867, *L&D* XXIII, p.219)

106. The episcopal meeting requested by the Pope reported that there were twelve students at Oxford from the colleges, only one of whom was from the Oratory School — in fact, there were two. (Newman to St John, 3 May 1867, *L&D* XXIII, p.203)

107. Newman to Barnabò, 21 Mar 1867, *L&D* XXIII, pp.93–4

108. Sheil to Newman, 27 Mar 1867, *L&D* XXIII, pp.102–3

established a school to prepare boys for Oxford.¹⁰⁹ Vaughan's interpretation was easy to disprove, yet the force of the objection to the school was the ease with which it could send boys to Oxford. Newman reflected:

We must be ready to give up the school and *I think it will come to this*. For how can we say that we do not *indirectly* prepare for Oxford, *while* we teach classics and mathematics, and *those* parents send their children to us especially *who will not* pledge *not* to send their boys to Oxford?¹¹⁰

Ullathorne urged Newman to go to Rome to clear his name, and so resolve the issue. Because St John was headmaster and could speak Italian, it was he who undertook the mission. In order to vindicate himself from the suspicion of playing a game with the Holy See over Oxford, Newman drew up a lengthy document: *Notes for a Statement to be presented to Propaganda in behalf of the School of the Oratory by Fr Ambrose St John*.¹¹¹ St John was also supplied with a selection of letters for use as evidence. At the Congregation Meeting to ratify his brief, he was told:

You must boldly say, that we must give up the School, unless we are allowed to teach in our own way, both as regards *subjects* and *method* of teaching, whatever be the subjects and methods of other educational bodies, and whatever be the animus and intentions of parents who place their sons in our charge.¹¹²

In other words, the academic dimension of its public-school identity was not to be surrendered.

The *Statement* described the salient features of the foundation: how the initiative came from parents; how some bore the financial responsibility; how they had petitioned Newman to start the first "purely lay school"; their objections to the college system, in wanting Greek taught better, older and more educated masters, and feminine care for young boys; and their willingness to pay extra to gain these advantages. Newman's intention had not been to prepare boys for Oxford, but for the Catholic University he had just left. He had not completely given up hope for establishing a link with it.¹¹³

109. Ullathorne to Newman, 28 Mar 1867, *L&D* XXIII, p.111

110. Newman to Hope-Scott, 29 Mar 1867, *L&D* XXIII, pp.112–13

111. Newman's memorandum on the Oratory School, 30 Mar 1867, *L&D* XXIII, pp.114–18

112. Newman to St John, 2 Apr 1867, *L&D* XXIII, pp.120–1

113. Newman's memorandum on the Oratory School, 30 Mar 1867, *L&D* XXIII, pp.114–18. Only the previous year he had petitioned Monsell, who was working in the government ministry that was granting

The *Statement* provided a summary of the "series of calumnies [...] persistently circulated against our School". The latest form of slander had turned "the very excellence of our teaching into an offence": because they taught so successfully that boys were succeeding at difficult competitive examinations, it was rumoured that "the system of education has been formally and intentionally" designed to prepare boys for Oxford. Three causes for opposition to the school were suggested: "the strong feeling of the adherents and partizans of the existing Catholic Colleges" — not the colleges themselves — against any new rival institution; "the fears of pious but narrow[-]minded men, who cannot comprehend how intellectual excellence and moral can be compatible [...] and who think that a good secular education must be a bad moral one"; and a jealousy of the Fathers, together with a suspicion that because they worked silently and without fuss, they must therefore be "deep and crafty, and be pursuing some secret object of our own".¹¹⁴ The time for silence had passed now that they had been accused before the authorities in Rome. The *Statement* asked if the accusations could be disclosed so that the charges could be answered.¹¹⁵

On 3rd April St John departed for Rome via Hyères, where he was to liaise with Bellasis and Hope-Scott. Three days later news of the secret instruction became public. The Rome correspondent of the *Weekly Register* claimed that the Pope was to reverse the act of Propaganda and stop Newman going to Oxford, on grounds of suspected heresy. Ullathorne was forced to reveal he had been instructed by Barnabò to prevent Newman taking up residence in Oxford. The news and manner of its revelation shed a new light on proceedings. "Now they have thrown off the mask and attack, not the school, but me and my teaching", Newman concluded.¹¹⁶ After conferring with Bellasis, Hope-Scott and

privileges to the Catholic University, to ask that they be drawn up in such a way as to allow boys from the school, while in England, to take examinations and degrees at it. (Newman to Moriaty, 4 Apr 1867, *L&D* XXIII, p.125)

114. Newman's memorandum on the Oratory School, 30 Mar 1867, *L&D* XXIII, pp.115–17

115. Following the advice of Ullathorne, three questions of a precise nature were added:

- i) would they be at fault in teaching Classics with great attention to an accurate grammatical knowledge when Oxford demanded of its students the same?
- ii) would they be at fault if parents of their boys decided, without consultation with them, encouragement from them or their knowledge, to send them to Oxford?
- iii) if it were possible, would it be permissible for the school to affiliate to Oxford University, on the same conditions as the colleges affiliated to London University? (*Ibid.*, p.118)

116. Newman to St John, 6 Apr 1867, *L&D* XXIII, pp.129–30

St John on how to proceed, it was decided that neither the *Statement* nor the questions should be presented, to avoid the possibility of new conditions being imposed on the school. They feared it could be put under a bishop, and as this was contrary to the privileges of the Oratory, St John was instructed to say they would rather close it than submit to a transfer of control. They decided that St John should concentrate on defending Newman and the school, and only request that the school be treated like others. Bellasis composed a long defence of the school for Talbot, but Newman suggested it be sent to Reisach instead.¹¹⁷ The magnitude of the opposition to the school was such that Newman welcomed matters being brought to a crisis as it seemed the only way to end years of criticism.

The article in the *Weekly Register* provoked a public outcry. The Stafford Club¹¹⁸ adopted an address expressing sympathy for Newman, declaring "we feel that every blow that touches you inflicts a wound upon the Catholic Church in this country."¹¹⁹ It was signed by all Catholic MPs, nearly all Catholic peers and a host of other Catholic laymen of standing.¹²⁰ Inevitably the lay address revived tensions with the clergy¹²¹ and was interpreted by some clerics as confirmation that the laity had absorbed Protestant attitudes.

The principal achievement of St John's visit to Rome was the partial lifting of the cloud of suspicion hanging over Newman, caused by his supposed refusal to answer the Holy See about his delated article. (It was only fully removed when Newman was made a cardinal in 1879.) In the interviews with Barnabò and the Pope it became apparent that the Holy See was principally intent on upholding its policy of opposition to mixed education and that it was seemingly uninfluenced by gossip in Rome. Talbot had to be convinced that the school did not prepare most of its older boys for Oxford, while Reisach

117. Newman to St John, 8, 17 & 28 Apr 1867, *L&D* XXIII, pp.134-5, 167-8 & 195; Newman to Hope-Scott, 11 Apr 1867, *L&D* XXIII, p.142

118. The Stafford Club was founded in 1851 by members of the Catholic aristocracy.

119. It was printed in the *Tablet* (13 Apr 1867, p.225) and the *Weekly Register* (20 Apr 1867, p.250).

120. The address was framed by Monsell and F.R. Ward. There were 184 signatories of whom six were school promoters. (*L&D* XXIII, pp.145-7) A few, such as Langdale and Bodenham, refused to sign on the grounds it would be interpreted as an act of defiance or disapproval of Manning. Ward persuaded Simpson and Wetherell not to sign as it would deter others doing so.

121. Manning wisely quashed an address from the clergy in support of himself. (Newman to St John, 3 May 1867, *L&D* XXIII, p.202)

appeared to be aware of the need for provision of higher education.¹²²

In an attempt to secure written assurance from Barnabò that the school would be treated like others, Newman wrote to thank him for the verbal assurance he had given St John. Barnabò replied that the colleges were approved establishments, whereas the school was still on trial. He noted the remarkable coincidence that, on the one hand, a new school had been started up, "professedly founded on the type of Protestant public schools, and on the other a desire to send to Oxford springing up in the minds of Catholic parents". To Newman this implied that, just as his presence in Oxford was judged to be too dangerous, in attracting Catholics there, so it continued to be at the school, for sending boys there.¹²³

It was a clear warning that the school could still be closed down. Even if its boys went to Oxford via Darnell or a Protestant tutor they could be accused of obeying the letter but evading the spirit of the directive from Propaganda and the bishops. As endless troubles, dwindling school numbers and eventual closure were a distinct possibility, Newman asked Hope-Scott for his verdict on the arguments for and against closure. The arguments against prevailed: closure would be a victory for its opponents, and a betrayal of its friends; the prospect of better times ahead could not be discounted; moreover, "We are doing direct good to the next generation by setting up an educational system such as ours — and indirectly by our action on other Catholic schools."¹²⁴ Prudence became the order of the day in all matters relating to Oxford. Parents contemplating Oxford for their sons were immediately asked to withdraw them;¹²⁵ others were warned not to mention Oxford on visits to the school.¹²⁶ Furthermore Newman refused to comment on possible exceptions to the bishops' warning.¹²⁷

122. St John to Newman, 1, 4 & 13 May 1867, *L&D* XXIII, pp.206–8, 218–19 & 226

123. Newman to Hope-Scott, 9 Sep 1867, *L&D* XXIII, pp.334–5

124. *Ibid.*

125. Newman to Simeon, 22 Sep 1867, *L&D* XXIII, p.342

126. Newman to Mrs Jones, 25 Sep 1867, *L&D* XXIII, p.345

127. Newman to Simeon, 9 Dec 1867, *L&D* XXIII, p.381

Competition in the Catholic system

The dominance of the leading Catholic colleges — Oscott, Stonyhurst and Ushaw¹²⁸ — was threatened by the appearance of the Oratory School. In the *Statement to Propaganda*, Newman claims that its most marked success was "indirect, but immediate, viz. the effect we have had on other places of education". He mentions improvements at Oscott and Ushaw, and the foundation of Beaumont,¹²⁹ and speaks of the Oratory School's example "in making the other schools, even the Jesuit schools, less continental in their ways and more English, as in trusting boys and giving up *espionage*".¹³⁰ Acton asserts: "Edgbaston has revived studies in all our colleges".¹³¹ Despite such claims, it is hard to find evidence to back them up. If vacation arrangements are taken an indicator, it suggests that the colleges were slow to change.¹³² Suggestions that Newman brought about an immediate realignment of the collegiate system along public-school lines are therefore untenable.¹³³ This realignment took place early in the twentieth century. In 1902 an Oxford convert, Ramsey, remodelled Downside along Wellington lines, introducing the prefect system, the house system (replacing Prefects with housemasters) and boosting games. Numbers trebled in his 16-year reign. A parallel development

128. In size, the order was Stonyhurst (over 200 boys), Ushaw (over 200), Oscott (about 130 — 110 lay and 20 church boys), St Edmund's (about 100), then Ampleforth and Downside (about 80 boys each). But, as Ushaw was more strictly a seminary, the order for lay boys began Stonyhurst, Oscott, Ushaw. According to social class and fashion the pecking order began Oscott, Stonyhurst, Ushaw, (Sire, *op. cit.*, p.32) though Newman referred to Stonyhurst as the Catholic Eton. ('Q in the Corner' to the editor, *Weekly Register*, 2 Jan 1858, *L&D* XVIII, p.219)

129. Newman's memorandum on the Oratory School, 30 Mar 1867, *L&D* XXIII, pp.117. Later he referred to the school's service "in raising the tone and standard of Oscott etc". (Newman to Hope-Scott, 22 Apr 1872, *L&D* XXVI, p.70) Studies at Ushaw received a great impetus when an accomplished scholar, Tate, was appointed president in 1863. (R.C. Laing (ed.), *Ushaw College: a centenary memorial*, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1895, pp.93–5)

130. This was mentioned in a conversation between Church and Newman. (Church to J.B. Mozley, 13 Jun 1865, R.W. Church, *Life and letters of Dean Church*, ed. M.C. Church, London, 1894, p.170)

131. Acton to Renouf, 14 Nov 1862, Acton, *Selections from the correspondence of the first Lord Acton*, p.165

132. Beaumont inaugurated the three-term year in the 1870s, while the Christmas vacation was only introduced at Stonyhurst in 1872. However, by 1864 boys were allowed home for Christmas at Sedgley Park. (Devas, *op. cit.*, p.36; Barnes, *op. cit.*, p.171; F. Roberts, *op. cit.*, p.105)

133. MacDougall claims that Ampleforth and Downside adapted themselves to the public-school model, "thus tacitly acknowledging the wisdom of Newman's pioneer step". (MacDougall, *op. cit.*, p.19) Upton argues that the foundation of the Oratory School had a double effect: it led to the Catholic colleges either becoming pure seminaries (as in the case of Oscott) or else separating off the post-graduate training of priests (as at Ampleforth, Downside and Stonyhurst). (Upton, *op. cit.*, p.86)

occurred at Ampleforth when Matthew began his extensive reforms in 1903, inspired by Winchester.¹³⁴ Overtaken first by Downside then Ampleforth, Stonyhurst adapted later.¹³⁵ Newman's boast to Propaganda that "we have led the way in a system of educational improvement on a large scale through the Catholic community"¹³⁶ was valid, but while he and friends led, no one followed.

It is likely that at first the Oratory School's example was dismissed. Acton spoke of the "admirers of the Seminary System" who deprecated the competition, seeing in it "an implied censure of their methods; a complaint of their results".¹³⁷ Ullathorne's surprising but enlightened appointment of Northcote¹³⁸ at Oscott in 1860 was met with hostility and suspicion by old Catholics. The convert friend of Newman soon raised academic standards and instituted wide-ranging reforms. The curriculum was revised; formal college exams were introduced; new staff were appointed; and the use of clerics as tutors for lay boys was discontinued.¹³⁹ However, Upton argues that Northcote's attempts to copy public-school practice only produced cosmetic change, because the Oscott curriculum had a different purpose.¹⁴⁰ A knock-on effect was that Sedgley Park adopted the Oscott system of studies and exams in September 1863.¹⁴¹ Was the Oratory School the catalyst for all this change? It is difficult to gauge its influence, not least because

134. D. Rees, 'The monastic tradition in the twentieth century', *Monks of England: the Benedictines in England from Augustine to the present day*, D. Rees (ed.), London, 1997, pp.236-7; H. van Zeller, *Downside by and large: a double fugue in praise of things lasting and Gregorian*, London, 1954, pp.60-5 & 90

135. Sire, *op. cit.*, p.165; M. Bence-Jones, *The Catholic families*, London, 1992, pp.265-6 & 307

136. Newman's memorandum on the Oratory School, 30 Mar 1867, *L&D* XXIII, p.117

137. MacDougall, *op. cit.*, p.19. An undated letter of Acton's is quoted.

138. James Spencer Northcote (1821-1907) was a Scholar at Corpus Christi College, Oxford and gained a First in Classics. He became close friends of Newman and Pusey. After becoming a Catholic in 1846 he taught briefly at Prior Park. Northcote became an authority on Christian antiquities and was editor of the *Rambler* from 1852 to 1854. After his wife died he studied for the priesthood under Newman. He was President of Oscott till 1877.

139. J.E. Champ, *Oscott*, Birmingham, 1987, pp.13-14

140. Northcote strengthened the Classical side at the expense of modern languages. Upton is correct when he declares that the distinction between the colleges and the public schools remained until Ampleforth, Downside and Stonyhurst ceased educating boys and training clerics together. (Upton, *op. cit.*, pp.26-7 & 41)

141. F. Roberts, *op. cit.*, p.105

evidence is so fragmented.¹⁴² No doubt the dispersion of its schoolmasters — Hopkins, Moody, Ransford and Walford — accelerated dissemination of school practice,¹⁴³ yet the leavening effect of the converts corresponded to their presence in the system. There was practically an undiluted concentration of them at the Oratory School, but it could claim no monopoly of their influence.¹⁴⁴ Some would argue that it was not all to the good. Margaret Bryant contends that the converts were influential in narrowing the curriculum at the very time when social pressures favoured a broader and more practical emphasis.¹⁴⁵

Levi claims that Beaumont resulted from the Oxford Movement and the desire it inspired in Catholics for a return to their proper place in society. Although its first masters and traditions were imported from Stonyhurst, it imitated the public schools more closely to undo the perception that Stonyhurst and the Jesuits were harsh and un-English.¹⁴⁶ Levi gives little evidence for his assertion, though he does record that a matron was employed at Beaumont shortly after its start.¹⁴⁷ Beaumont's magnificent setting and proximity to London enabled it to chart instant success. Within a year it had 50 boys, in four years 100 boys and in eight years 150. Newman noted the effect: it "has

142. A minor effect was in drama. St Edmund's began producing Latin plays using Newman's adaptations, and Northcote tried to do the same at Oscott. (Barnes, *op. cit.*, p.125 & Newman to Northcote, 10 Sep 1865, *L&D* XXII, p.51)

143. Moody joined Ransford at Oscott where he was soon involved in discussions with Northcote about alterations to the timetable there. (Moody's diary, 16 & 17 Apr 1862, BOA) R.V. Pope visited Sedgley Park as the external examiner in 1886. He set papers and conducted the vivas for the top four classes. (F. Roberts, *op. cit.*, p.137)

144. Walford's attempts to reform the system of studies at Eton encountered a "slavish adherence to antiquated traditions" and "jealous opposition to any innovation". (Clarendon Report III, p.264) After his spell at the Oratory School, he attempted to reform the teaching of Classics during his year at St Francis Xavier's College, Liverpool. (M. Whitehead, 'The contribution of the Society of Jesus to secondary education in Liverpool: the history of the development of St Francis Xavier's College c.1840-1902', Ph.D., Hull, 1984, pp.254-68) Later he introduced reforms at Beaumont. (Paul, *op. cit.*, pp.239-40) When Manning moved the divines from St Edmund's to Hammersmith in 1869, the convert Patterson took over the school for boys.

James Laird Patterson (1822-1902) was educated at Harrow and Trinity College, Oxford.

145. *The London experience of secondary education*, London, p.226

146. P. Levi, *Beaumont, 1861-1961*, London, 1961, pp.16-17; Barnes, *op. cit.*, pp.180-1

147. Mrs Hatcher began in April 1862 and worked at Beaumont for thirty years. (Devas, *op. cit.*, p.27)

cut us out" and "made our School thin".¹⁴⁸ An additional cause of the Jesuits' success was their facility in attracting the most promising converts.¹⁴⁹ Despite Oscott's golden period under Northcote (1860–77), its demise as a lay school, according to McClelland, was largely on account of the Oratory School.¹⁵⁰ By the mid-1880s the leading Catholic schools, according to Henry Sire, were Beaumont, Downside, the Oratory School and Stonyhurst, the last equal in size to the other three together.¹⁵¹

In 1872 the sub-commission on Catholic higher education sent their questionnaire to 800 clergy and laity. About 100 responses were merged into a *General report*¹⁵² by Purbrick,¹⁵³ while each of the five sub-commissioners produced an individual report. The process amounted to a survey on the state of Catholic education, though interpretations of the data varied considerably. Purbrick's *Special report*¹⁵⁴ asserted that Catholic establishments were "infinitely superior" to non-Catholic ones in "morality".¹⁵⁵ They secured "a higher average standard of knowledge in a wider range of subjects", yet the eldest and cleverest at each did not compare. Schools like Eton, Rugby, Cheltenham

148. Newman to Miss Giberne, 8 Aug 1867 & Newman to Hope-Scott, 30 Sep 1867, *L&D* XXIII, pp.287 & 346

149. Newman mentioned this in a conversation with Church. (Church to Rogers, 3 Jul 1870, Church, *op. cit.*, p.189) Of the 243 converts who became religious, 109 entered the Society of Jesus, according to Gorman. (*Op. cit.*, p.xv) They continued to maintain strong links with the old Catholics. (Mathews, 'Old Catholics and converts', p.235) It has been claimed that the four most prominent Jesuits in education at the time were all converts. In particular, Kingdon was responsible for raising the status of Stonyhurst during 1857–79 and Beaumont during 1880–87. (I.D. Roberts, *A harvest of hope: Jesuit collegiate education in England, 1794–1914*, St Louis, 1996, pp.175n & 177–8)

150. McClelland, *English Roman Catholics and higher education*, p.63. Oscott ceased to cater for lay boys in 1889.

151. Sire, *op. cit.*, p.106. Beaumont had acquired the reputation of being the 'Catholic Eton'. (Devas, *op. cit.*, p.53 & Levi *op. cit.*, p.25) Sire's omission of Ushaw with its 300 students may be due to the predominance of the church element there. Numbers entering Beaumont, the Oratory School and Stonyhurst are compared in Appendix III.

152. P. Hutton, J.S. Northcote, E. Purbrick, J.N. Sweeney & F. Wilkinson (eds), *Higher Catholic education: General report of the sub-commission*, London, 1872, Mount Street archives. The responses that formed the *General report* came from the first part of the questionnaire which had eight questions. The second part was to be answered by the colleges as institutions and had 31 questions.

153. Edward Purbrick (1830–1914) was educated at King Edward's School, Birmingham under James Prince Lee, and Christ Church, Oxford. He became a Catholic in 1850 and joined the Jesuits. He held office as Rector of Stonyhurst and Wimbledon College, and was Provincial in both England and America.

154. E.J. Purbrick, *Special report on the answers received by the sub-commission on higher Catholic education*, printed for private circulation, 1872, BOA

155. The term "morality" was synonymous with chastity, not moral development.

and Wellington were far superior in three respects: in scholarship; in composition or literary power; and "in expansion of mind, earnestness of purpose, definiteness of aim". He attributed the shortcomings to a variety of factors: smaller numbers in Catholic schools; "the very mixed character of our boys, who are drawn from the lower as well as the higher classes of society, from abroad as well as from England"; the "advanced age and backwardness" of incoming boys; the paucity of opportunity for comparison with the best non-Catholic schools; the absence of stimulus a university would provide; the absence of school prizes and scholarships; and "the terrible *vis inertiae* of comfortable, self-satisfied, mediocre, unambitious traditions".¹⁵⁶

Purbrick noted the "pretty universal sense of intellectual inferiority" among the Catholic aristocracy. He agreed with fellow converts as to the causes: apathy; ignorance of the extent of the deficiency; a fear of appearing to hold views opposed to those of the ecclesiastical authorities; fear of hurting their alma maters; and a dread of "incurring displeasure, or becoming marked men", if they ventured to suggest a Catholic college at Oxford or Cambridge. There was a pressing need to prepare boys adequately for the world they would enter.

If till the moment of throwing them upon Babel we endeavour to confine them in a hot-house of piety, to shut them up in a paradise of innocence, [...] to refuse them any sort of contact with that which is in many respects a great and good educational power, because of its incidental corruption, then we shall 'have succeeded but in this — in making the great world their University'.¹⁵⁷

Purbrick acknowledged that affiliation to London University had undeniable advantages in stimulating studies and removing a sense of isolation. Nevertheless, school education stood to benefit immeasurably from full access to university life. If there were Catholic colleges at Oxford or Cambridge, they could supply examiners for schools and relieve them from the torpor induced by their isolation.¹⁵⁸

Although only about a dozen responses to the questionnaires came from those

156. *Ibid.*, pp.8-9

157. Purbrick quoted from Newman's *Discourses to mixed congregations*. He listed the effects of Catholic isolation as either "want of public spirit ([...]), shyness, awkwardness, narrow-mindedness, want of polish and social 'tact'", or "a blunt and over-weaning self-confidence, obstinacy in ill formed opinions, intolerance of others' views, boorish assumption". (*Ibid.*, pp.11-12, 27-8 & 32)

158. *Ibid.*, pp.4-6 & 33-4

connected with the Oratory School,¹⁵⁹ the shortcomings identified were similar to those observed 15 years previously: the "utterly inadequate" payment of teachers;¹⁶⁰ the listlessness and apathy of Catholics entering manhood; their deficiency in culture, limited powers of expression and ill-ease in society; their propensity to social frivolity and lack of "any real spirit of work".¹⁶¹ St John and Kelke struck a new note in recommending the establishment of a 'modern side' at the leading Catholic Classical schools along the lines of Cheltenham and Marlborough.¹⁶²

Northcote's *Special report*¹⁶³ grappled with the key issue: the colleges' "desperate struggle to fulfil the fourfold office of a Preparatory School, a Grammar School, a College, and a University". There were between eight and ten establishments catering for upper-class boarding education.¹⁶⁴ Stonyhurst and Ushaw contained nearly half the 1200 boys aged 8–18. The rest, with an average of 75 boys each, were too small to offer a first-class education, since classes were either too small or too few.¹⁶⁵ He welcomed the suggestion that the number of upper schools be reduced to four.¹⁶⁶ In response to Northcote's appeal Newman conceded that the Oratory School, while established to match the great Protestant public schools, had actually contributed to the problem — the multiplicity of schools. He offered to fit in with the proposed plan, "if judged to be best for the interests of Catholic education in England". He stipulated three conditions: that the reorganisation be carried out by "the Bishops, *in union* with the principal clergy and the

159. They came from the masters — present (Newman, St John and R.V. Pope) and past (Hopkins, Kelke and Moody) —, parents and promoters (Allies, Bethell, Poole, S.N. Stokes, Thynne, F.R. Ward and Wegg-Prosser).

160. M.H. Allies, *op. cit.*, p.98. Allies's full response can be found in *ibid.*, pp.94–104.

161. Eaton noted that many Catholics entered the army as a way of idling away time, without the intention of making it their profession. (Hutton *et al.* (eds), *General report*, pp.10–11)

162. *Ibid.*, p.27. The modern side of Cheltenham prepared boys for Sandhurst and Woolwich in much the same way as the Classical side prepared for university. (Bamford, *The rise of the public schools*, pp.25–6)

163. *Higher Catholic education: Special report by the President of St Mary's College, Oscott, upon the evidence supplied to the sub-commission*, printed for private circulation, 1872, Mount Street archives

164. To Stonyhurst, Ushaw, Oscott, Edgbaston, Beaumont, Downside, St Edmund's and Prior Park, he added St Lawrence's, Ramsgate and St George's, Croydon.

165. At the Oratory School, with six masters for about 60 boys, classes were small. (School prospectus, n.d. [1867], BOA) At Stonyhurst there were nine masters for 215 boys and classes were as large as 35. (Taunton Report V, pp.327–8 & 332)

166. *Special Report*, pp.19–22

laity"; that all schools participate; and that property be "preserved from injury".¹⁶⁷ In Newman's opinion it was for the school's "own comfort" that it should be either a public or preparatory school (it was too broken up with different ages — 70 boys aged between 8 and 18) but he suspected he was alone among the Fathers in preferring the latter. He thought the intrinsic difficulty of numbers would eventually force them to make this choice, unless duty to the common good did so first.¹⁶⁸

Northcote later reopened the matter with Newman, arguing that Oscott and the Oratory School were "trying to occupy precisely the same ground". The special rivalry between them was a drain on finances and personnel. Neither could break even, while Oscott swallowed up the services of ten or eleven priests which the diocese could scarcely afford to spare.¹⁶⁹ Comparison of entry lists up to 1889 indicates that Oscott had the upper hand in terms of transfers: 16 from the school to Oscott and only seven in the opposite direction. However, every family that switched its traditional allegiance from Oscott to the Oratory School represented a loss to the former.¹⁷⁰ Newman denied the special rivalry: it was greater between the Oratory School and Beaumont!¹⁷¹ The interchange of pupils between them was 24 against 17, in Beaumont's favour.¹⁷² More significantly, Beaumont managed to attract sons of several Oratory School promoters.¹⁷³ Newman offered Northcote one practical solution to assuage their shared anxieties: that all the schools should join together in a "lock out" and raise their fees, "and stand by each

167. Newman to Northcote, 9 Apr 1872 & Newman to St John, 10 Apr 1872, *L&D* XXVI, pp.61-3

168. Newman to Hope-Scott, 22 Apr 1872, *L&D* XXVI, p.70

169. Northcote to Newman, 5 Apr 1878, *L&D* XXVIII, p.48

170. An exhaustive analysis has not been undertaken, but at least a dozen old Oscotians sent sons to the Oratory School.

171. I.D. Roberts alludes to the stiff competition between the two schools when he describes the Oratory School as "a great danger". (*Op. cit.*, pp.181-2)

172. This raw data simplifies a complicated picture. Several transfers coincided with younger brothers beginning, as in the cases of Baillie, Hussey and Safe, all of whom transferred to Beaumont. Two boys made a double switch: the Nugent brothers moved to the Oratory School in January 1876 and back again in February. D. Sheil began at the Oratory School, crossed to Beaumont but then joined the Birmingham Oratory. At least two boys had an intermediate stay at Oscott: Molyneux-Seel and R. Sheil. Others ended at a third school: two Wilberforce cousins finished their education at Stonyhurst after spells at the Oratory School and Beaumont.

173. It accepted sons of Scott-Murray, Monsell and H. Wilberforce, as well as J.M. Capes.

other".¹⁷⁴

It is difficult to assess whether attempts to create a top school in the capital represented a challenge to the Oratory School, given the location.¹⁷⁵ Manning began St Charles's College in 1863 under the supervision of the Oblates of St Charles and the direction of his nephew. It claimed to pursue the English public-school system: established to educate the capital's upper classes; an absence of espionage; an emphasis on trust; special attention to the development of character; management by sixth-form prefects; all conducted amidst an unobtrusive religious influence. In 1872 it moved from Bayswater to an 11-acre site, St Charles's Square. At a cost of £40,000, grand buildings were erected with fine facilities. By 1876 it had 130 pupils, including church boys.¹⁷⁶ The academic status was enhanced by the preponderance of converts among the Oblates, yet, despite its claims, it catered for the emerging Catholic middle class, preparing boys for the professions.¹⁷⁷

A Jesuit plan for a London school had been blocked by Manning but, in 1873, Capel opened Kensington Catholic Public School.¹⁷⁸ It claimed to cater exclusively for sons of gentlemen, though it had a modern as well as Classical side. By 1879 it had 74 boys, mainly sons of soldiers, doctors and lawyers, but an unsuccessful launch of a joint-stock company to expand numbers to 400 and debts of £28,000 forced it to close.¹⁷⁹ The

174. Newman emphasised that all the schools represented different traditions, and supplied different wants and tastes. (Newman to Northcote, 8 Apr 1878, *L&D* XXVIII, p.49)

175. In general the gentry were very reluctant to patronise London schools. (Bamford, *op. cit.*, p.14)

176. The college's praises were sung in an article in the Catholic press. The new buildings were 300 feet in extent and included a 140 foot tower. £1300 was spent on outdoor facilities: a cricket pitch, a gymnastics yard, gardens and an asphalt skating ring! The site was sufficiently large to allow further growth. A special emphasis was placed on mathematics, taught by a former Fellow of New College, Oxford. (Anon., 'St Charles's College, Bayswater', F.J. Kirk, *Reminiscences of an Oblate of St Charles*, London, 1905, pp.72-8, quoted from *Westminster Gazette*, Feb 1876) Fees were 35, 50 and 60 guineas for junior, senior and over-15s respectively. (Bisson, *op. cit.*, p.931)

177. McClelland, *Cardinal Manning: his public life and influence, 1865-1892*, Oxford, 1962, pp.51-3. Twenty-one of the Oblates were converts. (Gorman, *op. cit.*, p.xv) No well-known names of old Catholic families or converts appear among the list of pupils of 1871. Comparison with the Oratory School list shows only one transfer of brothers — from the St Charles's to the Oratory School. (Midsummer exam listings, St Charles's College, Bayswater, 1871, Arundel Castle archives, MD.2145)

178. Day and boarding fees were £21 and £84 respectively. (Bisson, *op. cit.*, pp.930-1)

179. In 1879 Capel offered it to the Jesuits for £25,000 subject to the condition that he be allowed to continue running the school till his death. It could accommodate up to 150 boys and he had been pledged

school's greatest rival proved to be Petre's school at Woburn Park¹⁸⁰ which opened in August 1877. Within a few years he managed to attract sons of many old Catholic and convert families. By 1881 Oratory School numbers had fallen to 47 and financial disaster threatened.¹⁸¹ Woburn had almost 100 boys in 1884 when it had to be closed.¹⁸² The school was the main beneficiary when its boys dispersed.¹⁸³

Petre's version of a Catholic liberal education

McClelland asserts that the monopoly of Catholic boarding education by the religious orders and the hierarchy was only seriously challenged twice in the nineteenth century — by the foundations of Newman and Petre.¹⁸⁴ Petre's version of a Catholic liberal education entailed radical changes to the curriculum and regime of the public-school model, providing a very different challenge to that of Newman.¹⁸⁵ It is doubtful whether

£10,000 for a new chapel. (Capel to the Provincial of the Jesuits, 15 Feb 1879) When the bishops offered Capel the rectorship of Kensington College it was on condition that he gave up the school. He defied them by not doing so, arguing that it would guarantee a supply of students and ensure that the College catered for aristocratic as well as middle-class youths. (McClelland, *English Roman Catholics and higher education*, pp.241–2, 299 & 325–9)

180. Woburn School was situated in attractive parkland and approached by a long tree-lined drive. From a hill, crowned with a Grecian chapel and picturesque ruin, there was a fine view of the Thames valley. (McClelland, 'The liberal training of England's Catholic youth: William Joseph Petre (1847–93) and educational reform', *Victorian Studies* XV, 1972, pp.269–70) It was the most expensive Catholic school on account of its fees; £90 for those under 12, £120 for those above. (Bisson, *op. cit.*, p.936)

181. R.V. Pope agreed to a reduction of his salary by £100 because of the crisis the school faced. During 1882/83 the school lost about £1,000. (Newman to Giberne, 30 Aug 1881, *L&D* XXIX, p.410; Newman to the Duke of Norfolk, 13 May 1882, *L&D* XXX, p.85; Newman to R. Pope, 19 Sep *L&D* XXX, pp.256–7; Trevor, *Light in winter*, p.592)

182. It closed because Petre's father had refused to allow him to squander more of the family fortune on it. Later that year Petre succeeded to the baronetcy and the family estates. As Woburn Park had been sold off and the boys had dispersed, the attempt to re-establish the school at Northwood Park on the Isle of Wight was abortive. It survived for just a few months in 1885. (McClelland, 'The liberal training of England's Catholic youth', p.277) It failed for other reasons too: Petre's health began to give way; he was cheated by his manager; and two boys at the school died. (Bence-Jones, *op. cit.*, p.237) The Josephites, who had begun St George's College in Croydon, moved their establishment and 109 boys to Woburn Park in 1885.

183. Comparison of the Woburn school list of 1881 (reproduced in the school magazine, *The Amoeba*, Nov 1881, p.8, Downside Abbey archives) shows that the Oratory School admitted eight Woburn boys in 1884 and 1885, while Beaumont took none. Although the Woburn list only contains three who were previously at the Oratory School, it is clear that it did attract its clientele.

184. McClelland, 'School or cloister?', p.126

185. Petre declared he was not in favour of the public-school system and that he shrank from the idea of a 'Catholic Eton'. (Petre, *The position and prospects of Catholic liberal education*, London, 1878, pp.10–11 & 19)

it would have survived Petre, as it smacked of "personal eccentricity and novelty" and relied on Petre's unusual gifts and social standing. Its boy parliament, invested with real power to legislate for the school community, proved to be a constant source of trouble with parents who feared mutiny.¹⁸⁶ Masters, who were mainly non-Catholics, became frustrated with a teaching role shorn of pastoral and disciplinary content.¹⁸⁷

Petre's initiative, unlike Newman's, came from deep within the Catholic body.¹⁸⁸ His foundation at Weybridge followed attempts at Downside to reform the system from within.¹⁸⁹ A crucial difference between the foundations was the manner in which Woburn Park began. It arose, not from a groundswell of opinion, but as the challenge of an individual, and opened in a blaze of publicity. No sooner had it begun than Petre issued the first of several pamphlets that stimulated a heated debate in the Catholic press. In these Petre made extensive use of Purbrick's *Special report*. The restraint of his opening salvo was relaxed in later pamphlets in which he gave full vent to his perception of the shortcomings of the colleges, particularly those of the Jesuits.¹⁹⁰

Petre argued that the Catholic educational system should be based on a more *generous* and a more *fearless* view than at present of the intellectual opportunities proper for youth. We must not mix our classes, we must close the doors of our schools to half-taught and undisciplined foreigners, we must not condemn our boys to over-strict and prison-like discipline, to unlovely exteriors,

186. For a description of the boy parliament and court of justice see McClelland, 'The liberal training of England's Catholic youth', pp.271-4 and Chichester, *op. cit.*, pp.65-71. The system of pupil self-governance bore similarities to that established by the Hill family at Hazlewood and Bruce Castle.

187. 'X', 'Personal reminiscences of a Catholic Eton', *Journal of Education* CCCLXXIV, Sep 1900, pp.555-6

188. He was born in 1847 at Thorndon Manor, Essex, the family seat of one of the most distinguished old Catholic families. In his own education Petre had passed through four of the colleges — three years at Stonyhurst, six years at Downside, then further years at Oscott, Stonyhurst again and St Beuno's.

189. As a 'permanent guest' at Downside during 1874-77, Petre was a tutor in history and English literature and composition. He revived the debating society, initiated school opera, and became a mentor and companion to senior boys. He endowed a library, a new swimming pool and a cloister. He expounded his views on school discipline and management, and criticised the haphazard medical care. (S. Foster, 'Monsignor Lord William Joseph Petre (1847-93): a pillar of Downside', *Recusant History* XXII, pp.88-101)

190. *Remarks on the present position of Catholic liberal education*, London, 1877; *The problem of Catholic liberal education*, London, 1877; *Catholic education: its present state and future prospects*, London, 1877; *The position and prospects of Catholic liberal education*, London, 1878; *Catholic systems of school discipline*, London, 1878

to 'the terrible *vis inertiae* of comfortable, self-satisfied, mediocre, unambitious traditions'.

Petre gave evidence of a change of public mood. School authorities were yielding more "to the just and loud demands of parents that their boys must be thoughtfully, gently, individually, intelligently cared for, must have what of comfort their social position may afford and their prospects warrant"; there was milder school discipline; and a higher regard for the "completeness and scholarship, the social polish of the Eton or the Harrow boy".¹⁹¹

Both Newman's and Petre's foundations sought to emulate the superior scholarship of Protestant public schools and their ability to foster certain human virtues.¹⁹² They were both convinced that it was possible to strive simultaneously for "full mental culture" and a "religious spirit".¹⁹³ Petre and Oratory School promoters alike, were highly conscious of the need to prepare boys to engage fully in the affairs of the world while holding firmly to their religious beliefs. To withstand the corrosive effect of the Protestant and rationalist environment they were to encounter on leaving school, an appropriate religious education was to be given.¹⁹⁴ The emphasis on integration in, rather than seclusion from, Protestant society reflected the broader aim of social and intellectual emancipation.¹⁹⁵ As lay schools, both foundations were designed to prepare boys for life

191. Petre, *Remarks on the present condition of Catholic liberal education*, pp.18–20. He quoted from Purbrick's *Special report*.

192. Newman and his convert friends had sought to remedy the unhappy but widespread conviction that Catholics compared poorly with Protestants in important aspects of natural virtue; that the supernatural virtues were seemingly purchased at the expense of human or natural virtues. Petre challenged the popular notion that "They [Protestants] cultivate the virtue which is *natural*, we aim at virtue which is *supernatural*", and invoked Purbrick's call "*to add to the supernatural virtues [...] the natural virtues, both intellectual and moral, which far from being necessarily prejudicial to the supernatural virtues, come in aid of them in a variety of ways, and which are essential to fit them for the world*". (Petre, *The position and prospects of Catholic liberal education*, pp.25–41)

193. Petre, *Remarks on the present condition of Catholic liberal education*, p.4

194. Petre criticised the rote teaching of religion at the colleges and emphasised the need to teach intelligent self-restraint. (Petre, *The position and prospects of Catholic liberal education*, p.30)

195. Petre argued that the reaction to the establishment of Kensington College was "the strongest evidence of the anarchy and confusion which stifles our opportunities of educational reform, retards our social progress, renders a due division of labour unattainable, keeps our 'prison dress' still upon us, and holds us even yet 'outside the great currents of English life, and therefore powerless to affect them'". (Petre, *Remarks on the present position of Catholic liberal education*, p.7) Petre quoted Purbrick who in turn quoted Allies. Allies's original point was that while 'prison dress' had been discarded in 1829 after 300 years, the 'prison spirit' had not. (M.H. Allies, *op. cit.*, p.101)

in the world. This preparation was to be gained by paying the salaries necessary to attract first-class schoolmasters.¹⁹⁶ Both Newman and Petre chose a curriculum based on a liberal rather than commercial education,¹⁹⁷ and catered for parents who were anxious for their sons' preparation for a professional career.¹⁹⁸ To this end, social polish was required too, but neither contemplated their institutions as finishing schools.¹⁹⁹ Both adverted to the drawbacks of admitting foreign boys and mixing classes: Newman's practical solution was to apply caution and to decide *ad casum*; Petre's policy was to allow no exceptions.

The differing conceptions of a liberal education of Newman and Petre cannot be accounted for solely by the time-lag between the foundations. Petre's stress on natural science and on educating the aesthetic faculties diverged from the narrower Classics-dominated curriculum of the traditional public schools that the Oratory School matched more closely.²⁰⁰ Yet both founders objected to the London University exam system because it encouraged cramming and a limited mental growth.²⁰¹ Like Newman, Petre

196. Ecclesiastical bodies chose to invest their revenue in sumptuous buildings and were unwilling to pay "at the market rate of professors and tutors of first-rate and matured ability". (Petre, *The position and prospects of Catholic liberal education*, pp.17 & 22)

197. Petre, *Remarks on the present position of Catholic liberal education*, pp.3-4

198. Rather than the aristocracy, Petre envisaged Woburn attracting "parents who lead a life of greater occupation than the aristocracy, parents who would see their sons distinguished rather in the world of professional success and literary fame than in an excellence merely social". (Petre, *The position and prospects of Catholic liberal education*, p.18) Woburn advertised itself as teaching all subjects required for competitive examination, and had a dedicated modern side. (Bisson, *op. cit.*, p.936 & 'X', *op. cit.*, p.556)

199. Petre reacted to the charge of hankering "after the brilliant prizes, the false freedom, the vice, and the infidelity of Protestant Colleges" ('A Catholic barrister', *The new departure of Catholic liberal education*, Dublin, 1878, p.43) by condemning "the licence and exaggerated freedom alleged to be characteristic of the great English Public Schools". (Petre, *The position and prospects of Catholic liberal education*, p.11) Petre's dress regulations were founded on the principle that it was important to dress like a gentleman as well as be one. Boys leaving the grounds were required to be with top-hat, umbrella and gloves. The dress code is cited in Chichester, *op. cit.*, pp.72-3.

200. In contrast to the highly structured college day — nine or ten hours of lessons and study-time, punctuated with recreation time — Petre proposed "a reasonable ease", time for private reading, reflection and the evolution of the literary faculties. (Petre, *Remarks on the present condition of Catholic Liberal Education*, pp.9-17) Petre felt that Classical studies concentrated too much on language to the detriment of appreciation of literature. He considered mathematics the ideal subject for developing mental discipline, but that the best knowledge was natural science, especially biology and physiology. (Petre, *The problem of Catholic liberal education*, pp.24-5)

201. But for the need to prepare for competitive exams, Petre asserted that "a reflective habit of mind should be the grand prize of a liberal education". Besides the London University exams, Petre criticised the resulting mutual competition between the colleges, as each sought fame from the published exam results. (Petre, *The problem of Catholic liberal education*, pp.20-2) Petre petitioned the bishops for a relaxation of

wished for less restricted access to literature.²⁰²

Petre criticised the harmful effects of the Jesuit surveillance system on the development of character.²⁰³ More generally he thought Catholic schools were too like boy-barracks rather than homes. He recommended two examples of good practice from the Clarendon Report: the Eton dame system and the Harrow system of house-tutorship.²⁰⁴ Either system of subdivision would provide "advantages of personal and individual influence, combined with minute and intelligent but elastic surveillance, and domesticity of life".²⁰⁵ His educational ideal of 20–30 boys under one house-master was in operation at Woburn.²⁰⁶ It is quite possible that he also imitated aspects of the dame system as he employed a matron to look after the younger boys and their needs.²⁰⁷

Petre went further than Newman's friends in his scathing criticism of a system which failed to inspire trust.²⁰⁸ According to Petre, two forces operated in moral

the policy over Oxford. (Evennett, 'Catholics and the Universities, 1850–1950', p.305)

202. Petre appealed for a wider range of reading: "let some competent and large-minded person direct as far as he can the taste of each to standards ever rising". In his days at Stonyhurst novels had not been permitted, while Walter Scott's works were still banned at most of the colleges. (Petre, *Remarks on the present position of Catholic liberal education*, p.22)

203. In Jesuit colleges there was little contact between masters and boys outside class, because masters were forbidden to see boys in their rooms. Being in the interests of religious life, the system was not geared for dealing with boys "separately in time, and separately in manner". There were no provisions for the interrelation of private tutor, housemaster or form-master. Except for Capel's school, there was no provision in the Catholic system for separate boarding houses. (Petre, *Catholic systems of school discipline*, pp.12–18) He was clearly unaware of practice at the Oratory School. The Jesuits did, and still do, rely on dividing horizontally, according to age, rather than vertically, by boarding house.

204. He did no more than quote questions and answers (Clarendon Report III, pp.106 & 260–1; IV, pp.161–3, 172–3 & 194) to reinforce his preference. (Petre, *Catholic systems of school discipline*, pp.45–56)

205. Petre, 'Large or small schools', *Dublin Review* XXX, Jul 1878, p.105

206. Petre, *The position and prospects of Catholic liberal education*, pp.51–2 & 'X', *op.cit.*, p.556

207. Chichester, *op. cit.*, p.62

208. Petre argued that public-school boys were not "subjected to a minute personal discipline, a mechanical system of surveillance, or the enforced company of minds unsympathetic with his own". Catholic educators seemed "too ready to display to youth the weakness inherited by original sin; — and all too unwilling to teach our sons that a general and manly honesty of purpose is a better preservative both to faith and morals than any code of preventive rules administered by superiors jaded and worn down by the perpetual monotony of their duties". (Petre, *Remarks on the present condition of Catholic liberal education*, pp.21–5) Arrangements assumed that boys might be continually "meditating the worst kind of evil". Masters and Prefects were present to detect and punish, not encourage and help. Often young and inexperienced, they were not up to the delicate and complex task of educating boys; seeing to their yearnings, troubles and aspirations. Characters were marred or crippled. Entering school they were cast "into a world where

education: systems of surveillance regulated social life by preventing vice, while the masters' wholesome influence on boys stimulated virtue. The latter being "the more *noble* and the more fertile of result", he aimed to minimise the restrictive element in order to secure individual moral growth.²⁰⁹ It was precisely this desire to minimise surveillance by stressing trust and personal influence that set the two schools apart from others. Both offered a generous liberty and incorporated the prefect system, but undoubtedly Woburn went further.²¹⁰ Woburn's flexible school timetable and the boys' self-governance were enlightened but risky innovations, especially in view of Petre's lack of experience with non-Catholic public schools. This ignorance was betrayed in his idealised notion of them.²¹¹ Petre believed that English boys had "a manly self-respect" and he favoured the individual independence that would allow them to develop habits of natural virtue. "Edgbaston was founded, I believe, with the express purpose of instituting [such] a reform", Petre wrote in his only reference to the Oratory School. Evidently Petre was unacquainted with Newman's version of a Catholic liberal education.²¹² Woburn faced similar difficulties to the Oratory School. Outside its circle there was "persistent and deep-rooted opposition to the new educational venture from the established interests, and

suspicion, reserve, the extinction of the natural affections, severe and frequent punishment, have rudely displaced paternal advice, maternal gentleness, the rational, intelligible, and affectionate discipline of well-ordered family life". The system fostered "the growth of artificial and constrained habits in some, of rebellious protest and decay of self-respect in others, of a senseless and uncultured Spartanism in very many". (Petre, *The position and prospects of Catholic liberal education*, pp.46-8)

209. 'Large or small schools', pp.98-104. Petre's analysis bore close resemblance to Newman's. For Newman's distinction between the system of law and the system of influence see Chapter VI, 'Discipline and influence', *Historical sketches* III, pp.60-76.

210. At Woburn the senior boys generally managed themselves. The middle school was under the special care of Petre, while the junior boys were monitored by prefects chosen from among the senior boys. (Chichester, *op. cit.*, pp.61-3) There was no system of reward, corporal punishment was rarely administered and there was no rigid timetable for classes. 'Private study' was a recognised activity. (McClelland, 'The liberal training of England's Catholic youth', p.275)

211. Petre encouraged games which taught "self-restraint and gentlemanly bearing", such as cricket, but not football. He accused the colleges of yielding to the tyranny of muscular Christianity. (Petre, *The problem of Catholic liberal education*, pp.18-19) A rival pamphlet accused Petre of muddled thinking and self-contradiction. It was pointed out that Protestant public schools had barbaric customs and that they vehemently pursued the cult of games. The best specimens Petre's system was likely to produce were "silly and impracticable *dilettanti*". It ridiculed the curriculum based on "the enjoyment of romance and the study of biology". ('A Catholic barrister', *op. cit.*, pp.5-6, 31 & 34)

212. Petre, *Catholic systems of school discipline*, p.43n. Petre also mentioned the Oratory School in his classification of boarding schools. He divided them into those run by religious bodies, those by secular clergy and those "under the moral management of ecclesiastics, with the assistance of lay tutors". There were three of the latter type: Edgbaston, under the care of the Oratorians; St Charles's College, Bayswater, under the care of the Oblates of St Charles; and Woburn Park. (Petre, *Remarks on the present position of Catholic liberal education*, pp.8-9)

especially from the Jesuits", yet Petre was not as isolated as Newman had been. Somehow, despite boys proceeding to Oxford, he managed to persuade Manning to visit Woburn in 1882 and give it his support and blessing.²¹³

Conclusion

The public airings of the state of Catholic education in 1848–50, 1859–61 and 1871–72 seem to have led to little change, as in 1877–78 the same deficiencies were dwelt upon. The isolation of Newman and his school from mainstream educational practice would account for this, as well as "the terrible *vis inertiae* of comfortable, self-satisfied, mediocre, unambitious traditions" alluded to by both Purbrick and Petre. An additional factor was the influence on Catholic public opinion of men like W.G. Ward. Through the *Dublin Review* Ward strongly opposed Petre and those like him who recommended adopting public-school practice. Ward asserted that the "predominant purpose" of college supervision was the "preservation of purity". The alternative was to yield to what Arnold called the "tyranny of public opinion", which, left to itself, descended to a carnal and worldly moral standard. The complete separation of masters and pupils led, in Dean Stanley's words, to "the most anti-Christian system ever devised with an honest intention by persons professing Christianity". For Ward, "the evils of a public school are inseparable from its very essence". Its goods were merely accidental, and depended entirely on the staff.²¹⁴

Ward buttressed his arguments with evidence from a wide range of sources: memories of his own school-days at Winchester; the writings of Allies, Arnold, Ferrar, Hughes, Newman, Oxenham and Simpson; and the Clarendon Report. He argued that celibate superiors were best able to secure paternal supervision, that shared education was a blessing for lay boys, and that Catholic schools should be small and few so as to promote individual attention. He ridiculed the suggestion that "premature initiation in vice" at school was a suitable preparation for the struggles of life. In summary, "Catholic

213. McClelland, 'Liberal training of England's Catholic youth', pp.275–7

214. 'Catholic college education in England', *Dublin Review* XXX, Apr 1878, pp.330–1 & 345–8; 'Catholic college discipline', *Dublin Review* XXX, Jul 1878, pp.87–8; 'Catholic colleges and Protestant schools', *Dublin Review* XXX, Oct 1878, p.313

colleges and Protestant public schools stand out in most pointed mutual contrast" — "A 'Catholic Eton' is (to our mind) a contradiction in terms."²¹⁵

According to John Coulson, nothing demonstrated so effectively the gulf between bishops and laity, and between converts and fellow Catholics, as the clash over education.²¹⁶ The repercussions for the Oratory School were considerable, as the result was to polarise views in Catholic circles and to perpetuate the school's reputation as one for converts and like-minded cradle Catholics. After the Darnell crisis, Newman began to steer it away from liberal Catholic influence, but not without incurring further damage. The school was a key issue over which the paths of Acton — as well as Manning²¹⁷ — and Newman diverged, for Acton blamed Newman's unwillingness to back his journals on Newman's wish to protect the school.²¹⁸

The buffeting suffered by the Oratory School in the 1860s was due to its precarious location amidst the turbulent cross-currents within the Catholic body. One struggle taking place was for influence in education. After the bishops' first warning in 1865 Newman suspected Manning was "afraid of any influence I might exert on the rising generation of Catholics, and that he would break up or transform our school, if he could".²¹⁹ His suspicion was confirmed as later events pointed to a determination to keep him out of education.²²⁰ His decision to do all in his power to save the school in the spring of 1867 was an expression of his determination not to lose his foothold in education. (Vincent Blehl has shown that, like Newman in England, Brownson suffered from the misunderstandings and hostility of fellow Catholics as he attempted to reform Catholic

215. 'Catholic college education in England', pp.330, 336, 340, 346, 348–50 & 352–3; 'Catholic college discipline', pp.89 & 95; 'Catholic colleges and Protestant schools', pp.279–80, 284, 288–9 & 315

216. Newman, *On consulting the faithful in matters of doctrine*, ed. J. Coulson, p.15

217. The general issue over which Newman considered his ways parted with Manning's was education: the trigger was the exclusion of the school from Manning's article. (Newsome, *The convert cardinals*, pp.230–1)

218. Newman considered Acton's attitude as unfair. The need to protect the school was just one reason for distancing himself from the publications, but not the underlying motive. (Newman to Monsell, n.d. [Nov 1862], *L&D* XX, p.353)

219. Newman to Monsell, 18 Jun 1865, *L&D* XXI, p.499

220. Newman to Hope-Scott, 9 Sep 1867, *L&D* XXIII, p.335

education in the United States of America.²²¹) It also served another purpose; the need to stand up to the clique, or "formidable conspiracy, which is in action against the theological liberty of Catholics". If they were strong enough to silence him, no one else would be able to resist them and "a reign of terror has begun, a reign of denunciation, secret tribunals, and moral assassination."²²² More was at stake than the school's survival. The "tyranny" Newman referred to was the style of ecclesiastical governance which brooked no interference, swept aside all initiatives at variance with its own, and where "one or two persons, such as Manning, seem to do everything".²²³ Acton had foreseen that "Newman's School, the future University (whether our own or at Oxford) and the whole interest of thought and science are mixed up in our cause" and that the only safeguards were "patience and a duck's back".²²⁴

Soundings in 1864, before the bishops' first warning about universities, had been clumsy. The questionnaire sent out had been slanted: Newman had not been invited to express his views; and the converts asked to express their opinion were hand-picked — almost all urged Propaganda to rule against studying at Oxford or Cambridge.²²⁵ Newman's diagnosis was that the opposition "came from unknown persons who mislead

221. Brownson highlighted the defects of Catholic schools while pointing out the value of other schools. Like Newman he aimed to raise the intellectual level of Catholics and pleaded for greater freedom for discussion. Like the Oratory School promoters, he felt Catholic schools did not "educate their pupils to be at home and at their ease in their own age and country, or train them to be living, thinking, and energetic men, prepared for the work which actually awaits them in either church or state". (V.F. Blehl, 'John Henry Newman and Orestes Brownson as educational philosophers', *Recusant History* XXIII, 1996/97, p.414)

Orestes Brownson (1803–76) founded the *Boston Quarterly Review* which he later revived under the name of *Brownson's Quarterly*. He became a Catholic in 1844 and was a leading intellectual figure in North American life.

222. Newman to Wallis, 23 Apr 1867, *L&D* XXIII, p.187

223. Newman to Monsell, 12 Jan 1865, *L&D* XXI, p.383. During the controversy about Stokes's article, a leading old Catholic complained to Simpson that "there is no limit now to the clerical ambition in England to ignore the laity altogether with their services and their sufferings, and to reduce their flocks to a condition utterly exposed to absolute authority without any of the safeguards for individual liberty which elsewhere have been carefully protected. [...] The Bishops want to sit among us as Schoolmasters to dictate our political and social as well as ecclesiastical rules." (C. Weld to Simpson, Ash Wed 1859, quoted in Simpson, 'The Catholic Church in England in 1859', *Downside Review* LXXXIV, 1966, pp.184–5)

224. Acton to Simpson, 27 Aug 1862, Acton, *Correspondence of Lord Acton and Richard Simpson* III, p.12

225. These included Manning, Northcote, W.G. Ward, R.A. Coffin, D. Lewis and J.B. Dalgairns from Oxford, and T.F. Knox and T.W. Marshall from Cambridge. (Newman to R.C. Jenkins, 12 Dec 1867, *L&D* XXIII, p.383)

Propaganda, put the screw on the Bishops and would shut up our school if they could".²²⁶ Events leading up to the 1867 warning appeared heavy-handed and peremptory. Simeon believed that "Advantage had been taken of the ignorance of the Roman Congregation, and its prejudices have been worked upon by those who ought to have had a higher value for the education of which they are seeking to deprive us": the English laity had been "treacherously and basely dealt with".²²⁷ In Newman's opinion, it was the defects of English Catholic *secular* education that were not understood in Rome.²²⁸ Newman interpreted the opposition to his going to Oxford as that "same dreadful jealousy of the laity, which has ruined things in Dublin. [...] Propaganda and our leading Bishops fear the natural influence of the laity: which would be the greatest, or (humanly speaking) is rather their only, defence against the world."²²⁹ The fear of an educated laity was evident in the bishops' 1864 questionnaire which had asked: "Ought the principle to be admitted that the laity should be more highly educated than their clergy [...]?"²³⁰

Newman thought it "impossible that active and sensible men can remain still under the dull tyranny of Manning and Ward".²³¹ During discussion of Ffoulkes' Oxford hall scheme, Newman advised friends "that effective action must originate with the laity, parents with educational solitudes, and so on".²³² After the bishops' meeting in 1864, Newman had encouraged friends to take up the Oxford question: "It is the Laity's concern, not ours", he told Gaisford.²³³ "Every thing must proceed from the laity — it is spoilt if priests interfere." He hoped that the laity would put their case before the bishops without the need for an ecclesiastical go-between, and suggested to Monsell that a prominent layman could express it in an open letter to a Catholic nobleman.²³⁴ In the

226. Newman to Gaisford, 16 Dec 1864, *L&D* XXI, p.343

227. Simeon to Newman, 3 Dec 1867, *L&D* XXIII, p.380n

228. Newman to Hope-Scott, 9 Sep 1867, *L&D* XXIII, p.335

229. Newman to Allies, 30 Nov 1864, *L&D* XXI, p.327

230. This was the first part of question 14. (*L&D* XXI, p.514)

231. Newman to Acton, 18 Mar 1864, *L&D* XXI, p.84

232. Arnold to Acton, 15 Nov 1863, Arnold, *Letters of Thomas Arnold the younger*, p.137

233. Newman to Gaisford, 16 Dec 1864, *L&D* XXI, p.343

234. Newman to Monsell, 12 Jan 1865, *L&D* XXI, p.384

event the laity composed an address to the authorities in Rome. Talbot's reaction to it conveys the extent to which feelings ran. He denounced it as another manifestation of the absence of Catholic instincts in the English laity, of their insubordination and disloyalty to the Holy See, and of a dangerous spirit to be put down. He warned Manning, "if a check be not placed on the laity in England they will be rulers of the Catholic Church in England instead of the Holy See and the Episcopate". Talbot considered the address a consequence of Newman "having quietly encouraged young men going to the University, by means of his school". Yet the insidious feature of the episode was not Newman going to Oxford, but the attitude of the laity. Encouraged by Newman, they were showing dangerous signs of wanting "to meddle with ecclesiastical affairs", such as university education at Oxford, instead of sticking to outdoor pursuits and social life. He warned Manning: "Newman is the most dangerous man in England, and you will see that he will make use of the laity against your Grace". The Pope expected him not to yield to "the detestable spirit growing up in England".²³⁵

The likes of Talbot did not have a monopoly on exaggerated views; the *Rambler* school had its fair share.²³⁶ The unfortunate outcome of the polarised and highly-charged atmosphere was that it became difficult to form a consensus on issues such as education which involved partnership between Church leaders and the laity. Instead, churchmen blocked lay participation, while laymen trespassed in church matters and compensated with exaggerated expressions of independence from the hierarchy. The controversy over the university question stemmed from another dilemma — the attitude Catholics should adopt in a Protestant society. Newman sensed a fear in the hierarchy over the mixing of

235. The much quoted passage runs: "They are beginning now to show the cloven hoof, which I have seen the existence of for a long time. They are only putting into practice the doctrine taught by Dr Newman in his article in the *Rambler*. They wish to govern the Church in England by public opinion, and Mr Monsell is the most dangerous man amongst them. What is the province of the laity? To hunt, to shoot, to entertain? These matters they understand, but to meddle with ecclesiastical matters they have no right at all, and this affair of Newman is a matter purely ecclesiastical. [...] Dr Newman is the most dangerous man in England, and you will see that he will make use of the laity against your Grace. You must not be afraid of him. It will require much prudence, but you must be firm, as the Holy Father still places his confidence in you; but if you yield and do not fight the battle of the Holy See against the detestable spirit growing up in England, he will begin to regret Cardinal Wiseman, who knew how to keep the laity in order." (Talbot to Manning, 25 Apr 1867, Purcell II, *op. cit.*, pp.317–19)

236. Simpson declared that as a result of the bishops' policy, "Religion is turned into administration, the clergy into theological police, and the body of thinking laymen into a mass of *suspects*, supposed to be brooding on nothing but revolution, and only kept together by motives of fear, and by external pressure of a clerical organisation." (Simpson, 'The Catholic Church in England in 1859', p.185)

Catholic and Protestants and a "wish for Catholics to remain a distinct caste among the Protestant gentry". If "inferiority in mind" was the necessary consequence of such isolation, so be it. He suspected that the difficulties over Catholic students at Oxford, as opposed to Woolwich or London, stemmed from a fear that "it will improve their intellectual powers, or create a mutual understanding between them and Protestants".²³⁷

In his biography of Wiseman, Ward has traced an interesting development. Wiseman's natural bent of mind was towards freedom of spirit. A favourite theme was the adaptability of the Church to all civilisations. In the 1850s he entertained schemes for Catholics going to Oxford and influencing national life, but later, on account of the dominance of liberal thought there, his policy became more stringent and unbending, and closer to Manning's thinking.²³⁸ The new prevailing sentiment among ecclesiastical leaders was that "War, not compromise, was the order of the day." In a bad world it was crucial to make Catholics more loyal to Rome and zealous. At the moment of danger they were called upon to show *esprit de corps*, to resist uncompromisingly the movements of the modern spirit, and to distance themselves from them. It was better that Catholics forfeit the culture and knowledge of Oxford than their risk loyalty to the Church and their faith. Thus a more rigid uniformity became the test of orthodoxy.²³⁹

237. Newman to Monsell, 16 May 1867, *L&D* XXIII, p.230. The *General report* (Hutton *et al.* (eds), pp.14–15) quoted the opinion of two aristocratic old Catholics, Dormer and Lord Clifford, who pointed out that a 13-year-old boy could reside on a Protestant naval training ship and a 16-year-old could begin his military training at Sandhurst, whereas an 18-year-old was forbidden to go to Oxford.

238. Manning considered the English universities to be "formally, essentially, traditionally, and, so far as any influence Catholics can exert upon them, immutably anti-Catholic. [...] The modern spirit of cultivated unbelief" had established itself as "the predominant intellectual tendency" of serious students. ('The work and the wants', *Miscellanies* I, p.57)

239. Ward, *The life and times of Cardinal Wiseman* II, pp.419–21 & 473–7. Manning considered it a great blunder to propitiate English society "by a tame, diluted, or worldly Catholicism". He urged his co-religionists to be "downright, masculine, and decided Catholics — more Roman than Rome, and more ultramontane than the Pope himself". ('The work and the wants', *Miscellanies* I, pp.64–6)

CHAPTER VIII CONCLUSION

The purpose of this final chapter is to combine the findings and conclusions of earlier chapters, so as to reach a deeper understanding of three distinct areas: the separateness of two educational traditions (as revealed in the attempt to merge them); the effect of intellectual converts joining the English Catholic community and the changes they inspired, particularly in attitudes to education; and Newman's contribution to "education, in [the] large sense of the word".¹

The merging of two traditions

In founding a school for boys "not destined to the ecclesiastical state",² the promoters broke away from the system of shared (clerical–lay) education. They did so by asking Newman to combine in one establishment the best elements of the Protestant public schools with those of a thoroughly Catholic formation. A measure of the scheme's novelty was the feeling among many old Catholics that it was doomed to failure, based as it was on the merging of, what they were convinced were, two incompatible traditions — the Catholic continental and the English public-school. Chichester thought the difference between them was fundamental. One was based on a "belief in the greater importance of the life to come"; the other rested "on the idea of turning out men of the world for the world".³ In this sense they could be said to have differing goals. Yet Catholics like Chichester also claimed an educational superiority for their tradition. They strongly favoured a regime with close supervision and strict discipline, as did the supporters of the contemporaneous Protestant private-school system. The separate argument about depth versus breadth was inconclusive, and indeed remains so a century and a half later.⁴

The public-school tradition went back little beyond the reign of Victoria. Michael

1. Newman's autobiographical memoir, 21 Jan 1863, *Autobiographical writings*, p.259

2. Newman's draft school manifesto, n.d. [Nov 1858], BOA

3. Chichester, *op. cit.*, pp.12–13

4. Tristram summarises the main difference as follows: "the one made the formation of (mental) character its great aim, the other sought to furnish the mind with so much knowledge. [...] Depth rather than breadth was the English ideal; and breadth rather than depth, perhaps not the ideal, but certainly the result, of the Catholic system." (Tristram, 'The Oratory School', Jan 1932, pp.4–5)

Sadler,⁵ the distinguished educationalist, argued that its main source was Winchester, joined by three other "ancient channels" — Eton, Westminster and "the Roman Catholic public school tradition in England".⁶ The Oratory School's fourth headmaster, Pereira,⁷ interpreted the latter as the inheritance of medieval traditions and customs which emphasised moral responsibility as well as intellectual achievement. Although the points of contact were few, the effect of this inheritance was evident. The thrust of the argument was that, whichever way it was traced back, the school's blueprint ultimately derived from a Catholic tradition. Pereira also maintained that Newman was influenced by his own thinking in the *Idea of a university* which incorporated a Catholic educational ideal, based on medieval Oxford.⁸ Ker describes the Catholic University in Dublin as a "fusion of the university structures of Louvain and the collegiate components of Oxford, of the continental and English systems, a university which would combine the distinctive features and strengths of both", though Newman undoubtedly preferred Oxford.⁹ In similar fashion, he began the school by building on the best public-school practice. Effectively, in both his university and school foundations Newman sought to combine two traditions, and to do so by re-forming what had been preserved in the national tradition.

George Rutler emphasises the distinction between immediate and ultimate ends to explain the compatibility of Newman's two aims, that "The end of [...] a Catholic University or of any university is 'liberal education'; though its ultimate end may be Catholicism". For Rutler this reads, "the end of education is learning how to think, and [...] the ultimate end of education is to think like the saints". The former is the task of the university, the latter that of the college or hall of residence.¹⁰ Just as Newman had

5. Michael Sadler (1861–1943) was a scholar at Rugby and gained a First at Trinity College, Oxford. After being a Student at Christ Church, he became director of special inquiries and reports at the Education Department. He later worked as Professor of Education at Manchester, vice-Chancellor at Leeds, and Master of University College, Oxford. He was president of the commission whose report set the pattern for secondary and university education throughout India.

6. M. Sadler, Speech day address at Sedbergh, *The Sedberghian* XLII, Jul 1921, pp.141–2

7. Edward Thomas Pereira (1866–1939) entered the school in 1876, became an Oratorian and succeeded Norris as headmaster in 1911. In 1895 and 1896 he played cricket for Warwickshire.

8. F.J. Grimshaw, 'The Oratory School', *Tablet*, 2 May 1959, p.428, uses Pereira's paper 'Cardinal Newman's Idea of a School' which it has not been possible to locate.

9. Ker, 'Newman the teacher', *Newman and education*, ed. M. Davies, Rugeley, 1980, p.38

10. G.W. Rutler, 'Newman's idea of a Catholic university', *Newman today*, ed. S.L. Jaki, San Francisco, 1989, pp.96–7, 106 & 112

argued for the harmony of lecture hall and residence, and against secularism by day and religion at night, so he envisaged activity in and outside the classroom functioning in harmony. The balance between the two was crucial. Over-emphasis on the religious dimension in Dublin made the university like a seminary. Stress on the public-school dimension tended to make the school, under Darnell, too secular.¹¹

In current heated debates about Catholic educational policy Newman would undoubtedly have sided with the holistic notion of a school, and against dualist tendencies which endorse the separation of the secular and religious.¹² The 'dual function' school, as a solution to the dilemma of a Catholic education confronted with the demands of a liberal society, would have been unthinkable to Newman's convert friends.¹³ A contrary tendency, present in Newman's time as now, stresses the Catholic dimension at the expense of true education. Mervyn Davies has posed the question: are we in the Church interested enough in education? He argues that Newman, in Christianising education, respected its inner autonomy and did not transform it into something else. He understood the connaturality of religion and education, while recognising that "knowledge is one thing, virtue is another".¹⁴ Newman's harmonious synthesis of secular and religious would therefore appear to undo Chichester's false dichotomy.¹⁵

In the same way that Newman's model university was an idealised Oxford imbued with a Catholic spirit, his notion of an ideal school for sons of the upper echelons of

11. Nevertheless, Newman recognised the ultimate supremacy of holiness over intellectual attainment. It is evident from his words of consolation to the mother of Francis Ward, who died in 1866, having left the Oratory School in 1861: "what was your mission [...] except to bring him to heaven? That was your very work, — not to gain him a long life and a happy one, but to educate him for his God." (Newman to Mrs F.R. Ward, 22 Sep 1866, *L&D* XXII, p.292)

12. Newman regarded the separation of intellectual and moral influence as "the evil of the age". (*My campaign in Ireland*, p.120)

13. McClaughlin maintains that there is a fundamental dualism in Catholic education; that secular and religious education can be distinguished and separated, practically as well as conceptually. Acceptance of this separation, argues Arthur, has paved the way for various aberrations and runs counter to Church teaching which proposes a harmonious synthesis between religious faith and culture. (Arthur, *op. cit.*, pp.81-2, 227-8 & 231-5)

14. M. Davies, 'Newman and education: some questions for today', pp.6-8 & 20. He quotes from Newman's *Idea of a university*, p.120.

15. For Newman, the purpose of education was "to fit men for this world while it trained them for another". (Quoted from the *Catholic University Gazette*, Oratory School, *op. cit.*, p.21)

society was a public school, purified of its failings and raised up by the same Catholic spirit. Thus Newman felt at liberty to adopt or reject any particular public-school practice. (The temptation to assign Newman an intellectual pigeon-hole has to be resisted, in educational matters as in others.)¹⁶ In doing so, Newman inevitably risked disappointing friends and associates like Acton and Darnell who had their own preferences. The crisis demonstrated that the establishment of a Catholic public school was a complex task. The lesson for present-day Catholic educators who seek to adopt successful secular or other models is, surely, to realise that it is insufficient to super-add the Catholic elements. Wholesale rethinking is required.

The 1860s was a decade of reform for public schools, though resistance to change was strongest at the most ancient foundations. Being a new foundation, the Oratory School was unencumbered with tradition and well-placed to address the demands of the day.¹⁷ It fares well on Honey's checklist of self-confessed failures of nineteenth-century boarding schools: infectious diseases; sexual immorality; and cruelty.¹⁸ In mapping out a new relationship between teacher and taught, Newman was a pioneer, though his written formulation pre-dated school practice. The major public schools and Catholic colleges gravitated towards the new enlightened ideal, with an accompanying tightening or loosening up, respectively, of discipline. Norman's remark that education at the Catholic colleges did not differ very significantly from that at the public schools is misplaced.¹⁹ This slip can probably be attributed to the indiscriminate use of the term 'public school'. When Moody transferred to Oscott in 1862 he complained that the Oscott system was "diametrically opposed" to everything he had been accustomed to (at Eton, as a pupil, and the Oratory School, as a master), and that he would be made to work needlessly long hours.²⁰ School correspondence frequently alluded to the gulf between the two systems which, due to Newman's influence, was gradually narrowed.

16. Norman asserts that Newman belonged to no particular theological school of thought and was not indebted to any dominant writer for his ideas. (Norman, *op.cit.*, p.314)

17. In similar fashion, Petre felt able to carry out reforms at Woburn without the impediment of Catholic collegiate traditions. (*The problem of Catholic liberal education*, p.4)

18. Honey, *op. cit.*, p.164. Only one reference to bullying at the Oratory School has been found while undertaking this research, in R. Speaight's *The life of Hilaire Belloc* (London, 1957, p.21).

19. Norman, *op. cit.*, p.180

20. Moody's diary, 9 Jan 1862, BOA

Given the notoriety of public-school life it is understandable that the majority of old Catholics viewed Newman's experiment with a mixture of caution and concern.²¹ They must have been perplexed at the range of attitudes expressed by the converts about their schooling. This may explain why, 20 years later, Petre observed that, despite the much vaunted external unity of Catholics, there was ever more internal disunity over how to combine "the advantages of full mental culture with the humility and steadiness of a religious spirit".²² Evidently the problem of combining the two had not been resolved to general satisfaction, despite the Oratory School's example. The recycling of outdated public-school horror stories by the likes of Chichester and Ward ensured that Catholic misgivings were kept alive. There are several plausible explanations for the eventual adoption of the public-school model by Catholic educators in the 1900s: the growing alignment of the two systems; the improved image of the public schools; the recognition of parental demands by the colleges; and the gradual integration of Catholics into society.

When Newman undertook the foundation in 1859, his first intuition was heavily constrained by circumstances. In 1862 he was forced to adopt measures that brought about a closer approximation to the colleges in order to safeguard against tendencies that had provoked the crisis. The time was not ripe for an 'independent school'. (It is tantalising to speculate what this would have entailed.) Nevertheless, the shift towards the college system was greater than it would otherwise have been, due to the influence of Bellasis and particularly Hope-Scott. The post-crisis changes hinged upon the relation between school and Oratory. Beneath the immediate issue there lay a fundamental question: what should be the attitude to educating the children of the wealthy? Newman distinguished the school from other Oratory works by insisting that this one be self-sufficient.²³ Although he allowed himself and other Fathers to lend money to the foundation, he insisted on interest payments being met despite the handicap incurred by the school. The Fathers received part of their board in return for their part-time contribution to the school. Full-time

21. The publication of *Tom Brown's schooldays* in 1857 and *Eric: or, little by little* in 1858 may have given substance to previously vague Catholic suspicions about public-school life.

22. Petre, *Remarks on the present position of Catholic liberal education*, p.4

23. Stress on self-sufficiency was evident at Dublin where Newman "wanted the University to be supported by those whom it was primarily intended to serve, the Catholic gentry of Ireland and England". (Trevor, *Light in winter*, p.49) Even when providing education for the poor, he stressed that a token amount be paid. (Newman to Coffin, 5 Jul 1849, *L&D* XIII, p.203)

involvement was rewarded with full pay. To Newman's mind, justice demanded as much.

Hope-Scott saw it otherwise. He viewed the education of sons of the upper and professional classes as a charitable enterprise which implied that the Fathers should forfeit their remuneration. A school along these lines effectively entailed a subsidy for the education of the well-to-do. It was a pattern that was replicated in all schools and colleges run by religious for this social group in the nineteenth century.²⁴ In the secular colleges the *quid pro quo* was that fees of lay boys supported church boys. Well into the second half of the twentieth century English Catholic public schools have been the almost exclusive preserve of religious orders. It is arguable that the element of subsidy they have provided has deterred the foundation of lay-run public schools.²⁵ Although circumstances forced Newman to retreat from his preferred position in favour of Hope-Scott's, he ensured that the Oratory continued to hold back from providing financial subsidies, that it maintained the high fee level, and employed lay masters, paying them as best it could.²⁶

Newman's original proposal for the school countenanced the involvement of just two Fathers, and its removal into the country and transfer into lay hands after four or five years.²⁷ The latter was indefinitely postponed on account of general difficulties; the former was precluded due to local difficulties — the Darnell crisis. Many of the promoters had originally rejected the siting of the school next to the Oratory for the very reason that

24. The Taunton Report (V, pp.328–9) reveals that the nine masters and four Prefects at Stonyhurst were effectively unpaid, only receiving maintenance. Their notional salary of £40 p.a. went to support those studying theology who would eventually replace them. This enabled Stonyhurst to maintain lower fees: 40 guineas for boys under 12; 50 guineas for those above; and 60 guineas for boys in Rhetoric, the highest class.

25. In 1947 the hierarchy "approved the suggestion that the Catholic laity should be invited to undertake the work of opening some of the new boarding schools required". Although there were 17 "independently active" prep schools run by the laity, the report of a committee established by the hierarchy showed that boarding and grammar school education had developed in haphazard fashion as the initiative had been left to clergy and religious. (Battersby, 'Secondary education for boys', pp.334–5)

26. A letter written a year after the crisis brings out Newman's altered stance: "to my extreme distress, though I started with the firm resolution that the Oratory should not lay out a penny on the School, because we began it, not for *ourselves*, but as a good work which would please St Philip and do good to the Catholic body, and though I know well how great vigilance it required to hinder the Congregation being compromised in its financial concerns, I say, to my extreme sorrow, we are involved to the extent of thousands". (Newman to Wilberforce, 13 Feb 1863, *L&D* XX, p.408)

27. Newman to Simeon, 17 Apr 1857, *L&D* XVII, p.17

it seemed to reduce it to a college. Yet, in resolving the Darnell crisis, Hope-Scott's hybrid solution introduced collegiate characteristics: control by an ecclesiastical body, and supervision outside classes by Oratorian Fathers. The location of the school amidst a rapidly sprawling industrial conurbation severely frustrated its public-school ambitions.²⁸ Insufficient resources, as well as prolonged uncertainties after the crisis, meant that it was unable to construct truly imposing buildings or to acquire adequate neighbouring land to substitute for a rural setting.²⁹ In fact, difficulties over renting playing fields that were both inexpensive and close by dogged the school authorities until the translation to Caversham.³⁰ This disability gave schools like Beaumont and Woburn a crucial advantage. The problem was incapable of remedy so long as the Oratorian connection continued.

In 1848 Capes identified a major weakness of the Catholic colleges as "the confusion of the ecclesiastic and the lay student in one indiscriminate body".³¹ Thirty years later Petre went to the heart of the problem.

Our colleges have hitherto existed for the support, primarily, of various forms of ecclesiastical interest; and, situated as Catholics have been until recently, I am strongly of opinion that the anomalous state of things educational, is but the correlative of the anomaly of our hitherto social and civil condition.

The Jesuits ran schools according to their pattern, regulated from Rome. The Benedictines gave theirs a character that was more English, but nonetheless monastic. The secular clergy were freer, but, as their colleges were primarily seminaries, their first duty was to the ecclesiastical students. All were unwilling to regard their establishments as primarily intended to serve the interests of laymen. Thus provision of a liberal education was compromised. Petre's contention was that, for the unrestricted growth of Catholic liberal education, another school was needed, one which was unhampered by service to

28. Newman recognised it was their "one great defect". (Newman's memorandum, 16 Feb 1862, *L&D* XX, p.98)

29. Apart from the school chapel, the only imposing edifice erected during Newman's time was the main school-room which opened in 1862.

30. Belloc regretted the loss of tradition the move entailed. "It seems that the odious animal, the parent, had been making a fuss about the position in town and saying it is bad for the boys, which is rubbish." (Belloc to Mrs R. Balfour, 7 Jan 1922, H. Belloc, *Letters from Hilaire Belloc*, ed. R. Speaight, London, 1958, p.115) Similar concerns over a city site resulted in several relocations from the capital: Charterhouse in 1872, St Paul's in 1884, Christ's Hospital in 1902 and Merchant Taylors' in 1933. Westminster stayed put. (Bamford, *The rise of the public schools*, pp.14-15)

31. 'Catholic and Protestant collegiate education', *Rambler*, Dec 1848, p.236

the needs of a corporate body and which was truly 'public' in serving public interests. A compromise between the colleges was unrealistic because of their incompatible aims and "pitted commercial interests". Whether on a secular or independent basis, the reforming school needed to be outside vested educational interests. Only one was required for the class who could afford Harrow or Rugby.³²

Petre would have modified his views after the changes at Downside and Ampleforth at the beginning of the twentieth century, as they answered his criticisms by their whole-hearted commitment to school education.³³ McClelland explains the success of these Benedictine schools using negative reasons: the demise of the secular colleges, distrust of Jesuit education, and wariness of the Oratory School.³⁴ His 'English educational dilemma' is surely resolved by observing that the Benedictines addressed the system's main defect — that provision of a liberal education for the laity was compromised — doing so by adopting the public-school model.

Petre suggested there was a link between the policy to keep teaching duties out of the hands of laymen and the "the *prevailing mediocrity of Catholic teachers*" in the colleges.³⁵ The system of student-teachers was unsatisfactory, partly because the young clerics lacked maturity — Petre argued that education was the work for a man in his maturity, not for early manhood or failing years. Where permitted, in the secular colleges, lay schoolmasters were at a distinct disadvantage to the clerics, as there was little scope for responsibility and they were badly paid.³⁶ These factors contributed to the parlous

32. Petre, *The position and prospects of Catholic liberal education*, pp.11–22 & *Remarks on the present position of Catholic liberal education*, p.25

33. In 1874 just over half of Ampleforth's pupils were church boys. "Only at Downside was the mission of educating the laity for a secular world seen as a significant ministry". (A. Bellenger, 'Revolution and emancipation', ed. Rees, *op. cit.*, p.211) Before 1900 Benedictine education was less professional than Jesuit education. (Rees, 'The monastic mission in the twentieth century', *ibid.*, p.236) A Jesuit thought that "even now it is certain that the Oratory School, Birmingham, has the reputation of providing better teachers than we in our Colleges". (R. Colley to Provincial, 7 Jan 1896, after attending one of the first Catholic headmasters' conferences, quoted in Basset, *op. cit.*, p.409)

34. 'School or cloister', pp.122–4

35. Petre, *The position and prospects of Catholic liberal education*, p.22

36. *The position and prospects of Catholic liberal education*, pp.15–22. The only layman appointed Prefect of Studies at Sedgley Park was in 1861. In 1870 five of the six lay masters resigned because of being forced to take boys for walks on their weekly half-holidays. (F. Roberts, *op. cit.*, pp.92 & 107) Stonyhurst first employed lay masters in 1897. (Sire, *op. cit.*, p.165)

state of a Catholic schoolmaster profession. The need for lay schoolmasters at the Oratory School was only alleviated by the steady accretion of converts.

Petre included among the supposedly self-serving motives of the colleges, particularly those of the religious, the emphasis on assuring a supply of vocations.³⁷ Would he have considered this applied to the Oratory School? The idea of a school as a feeder for the Oratory had been uppermost in Newman's mind in 1849.³⁸ Although this consideration is absent from Newman's correspondence in 1857–59, it is noteworthy that by 1882 seven of the 12 Fathers had come to the Oratory via the school, having been either masters or boys.³⁹ However this was achieved with fewer of the compromising characteristics mentioned by Petre, for three reasons: the proximity of the Oratorian condition to that of the secular priest, and therefore to a lay spirituality; the school's abiding emphasis on preparation for the world; and the understanding at the Oratory that only those interested in teaching would undertake it.⁴⁰

It is worth noting the extent to which the Oratory itself was compromised by its commitment to the school. Faber had a point when he argued that turning schoolmaster was more than just another pastoral work. He thought that undertaking a boarding school would divert from and modify St Philip's simple idea of the Oratory. The school and

37. The third of three reasons why the English bishops backed the system of shared education was the chance that some of the lay boys might turn out to have a vocation to the priesthood. (Third Westminster Synod, 1859, *The Synods in English: being the text of the four Synods of Westminster*, p.227) From his experience at Ware, Oakeley could say that the gain in lay vocations to the priesthood was greater than the loss among the church boys. (Letter to the editor, *Rambler*, Jan 1849, p.372)

38. Newman's thinking is fully revealed in a letter: "I think you will find no order or congregation but finds a school necessary to feed the order. The Benedictines profess this to be the only reason of their school at Downside, *by which they do not gain*. Stonyhurst has fed the Society. The Rosminians have begun a school. The Passionists, who have no school, have no novices. Looking to the future, it is a question whether we can keep up the Congregation without a school in some shape or other." (Newman to Faber, 23 Nov 1849, *L&D XIII*, p.305) Puzzling over the use of St Wilfrid's as a school, Newman anticipated that "Some of the Professors might in progress of time, not to say the boys, be converted into Oratorian subjects." (Newman's memorandum for Faber, 17 Dec 1849, *L&D XIII*, p.343)

39. Newman to the Duke of Norfolk, 23 Jan 1882, *L&D XXX*, p.54. T.A. Pope and T. Eaglesim, both converts, were masters. R. Bellasis, H.L. Bellasis, D. Sheil, F.X. Morgan and F.J. Bacchus were pupils. Other ex-pupils joined a little later: R.O. Eaton, E.T. Pereira and A.C. Pollen. Three joined the London Oratory: W.J. Bowden, E.S. Crewse and R.F. Kerr. It has been pointed out that since the school became lay-run no Oratorian vocations have come from it. (Addington, *op. cit.*, p.128)

40. If St John's health had failed "we should be dished and ruined", Newman once remarked. (Newman to Miss Ryder, 22 Jul 1862, *L&D XX*, p.239)

Oratory became so interdependent after the crisis that Newman admitted: "To put an end to the school would be almost to put an end to the Oratory".⁴¹ While sympathising with Faber, Addington argues that Newman's actions were defensible on the grounds that mid-nineteenth century conditions in England called for some accommodation or sacrifice of the Rule.⁴² It was this element of compromise that Petre presumably considered to be absent at the colleges.

The London Oratorians, who had opposed the establishment of a boarding school on the grounds that the work would distort their vocation, may well have viewed affairs at Birmingham as confirmation of their position. They disagreed with Newman over the interpretation of the condition of grave necessity to allow the foundation to be undertaken. Newman considered the dire need of his fellow converts as a call to service, one that involved the renunciation of domestic peace. When two Fathers elected to take over a Catholic grammar school in Birmingham in 1887, Newman insisted on recording his displeasure in the Congregation minute book. He contended that the Congregation should not assume responsibility for it and, on this occasion, invoked the Rule which restricted Oratorian activities lest it detract from the Oratory's primary work.⁴³ The inevitable occurred in 1895 when the Oratory undertook full financial responsibility for St Philip's Grammar School.

In their foundations Newman and Petre attempted to merge two educational traditions, but they laboured under a common handicap: an intimate knowledge of only one of the two strands. The lack of familiarity of Darnell and his masters with religious instruction at Catholic schools was mirrored by the absence of safeguards at Woburn for preventing a slide into licence and anarchy.⁴⁴ Very little can be gleaned from the *Letters*

41. Newman to the Duke of Norfolk, 23 Jan 1882, *L&D XXX*, p.54

42. Addington, *op. cit.*, pp.153-4 & 173

43. Newman had it recorded that the arrangement had been made without his full consent and knowledge; that he did not want it to be broadcast "that the new School was established by us as a Congregation — it being the work of two zealous Fathers of the Congregation only"; and that he would allow no Congregation money to be spent on it. (*L&D XXXI*, p.229n, based on the entry in the Congregation minute book of 11 Sep 1887; Newman's memorandum about St Philip's Grammar School, Dec 1889, *L&D XXXI*, pp.278-9)

44. The three chief founders of the Oratory School were familiar with the Catholic system, however. After his conversion in 1845, Newman had stayed at Oscott and toured the Catholic colleges. Both Bellasis and Hope-Scott were very knowledgeable about Catholic education in England and on the European mainland.

and diaries regarding Newman's opinion of Woburn. The single direct reference to it — "I don't fear Mr Petre — though for a time he may embarrass us"⁴⁵ — indicates Newman's contentment with his own vision.⁴⁶ It is evident from Petre's pamphlets that he knew little about the Oratory School.

In one crucial respect — the financial basis — it was Petre's school, not Newman's, which conformed to the collegiate type. Once the subsidy was cut, Woburn died. It relied on Petre's largesse, in much the same way as the colleges had relied on their benefactors.⁴⁷ By contrast, Newman considered that parents should shoulder the financial burden of schooling as the responsibility to educate lay with them. The Fathers' loans were merely a temporary, but necessary, concession on account of adverse circumstances. Newman was keenly aware of the financial losses of Sewell at Radley and Stevens at Bradfield.⁴⁸ Newman continued to insist that the school be self-sufficient and, although it never fully paid its way, it nearly did.⁴⁹ According to McClelland, the Oratory School merely contributed to a dilution of teaching capacity in the Catholic body while continuing the process of lavishing huge sums on boys' schools.⁵⁰ These seem harsh words for a foundation that arguably contributed most to reforming Catholic boarding

45. Newman to the Duke of Norfolk, 23 Jan 1882, *L&D* XXX, p.54

46. Stockley recounts how Petre tried to gain Newman's support in his campaign against the educational methods of the religious. Petre visited Edgbaston and spoke at great length on the subject while Newman listened in complete silence. When he had finished, Newman asked Petre whether he had come by the North-Western or Great Western line, and proceeded to compare their respective merits! (W.F.P. Stockley, *Newman, education and Ireland*, London, 1933, pp.154-5)

47. J.C. Maxwell, after becoming a Jesuit, gave £16,500 towards the purchase of the Beaumont property in 1854, and £42,000 to the Society in 1858. (McClelland, 'The liberal training of England's Catholic youth', p.261) Including repairs and contents, Beaumont cost £35,800. During Eyre's rectorship at Stonyhurst, the college moved into grand new buildings with the help of £60,000 of his own patrimony. (Sire, *op. cit.*, p.106) Lord Petre was a major patron of St Charles's, which cost £40,000. (McClelland, *Cardinal Manning*, pp.52-3) Through Watmough's generosity £12,000 was spent on improvements at Ampleforth in 1859-61. (J.C. Almond, *The history of Ampleforth Abbey, from the foundation of St Lawrence's at Dieulouard*, London, 1903, p.347) Major benefactions at the colleges before the Oratory School have already been described. The above are contemporaneous or later developments.

48. Newman to Bittleston, 26 Oct 1881, *L&D* XXX, p.13. Sewell had failed at Radley with debts approaching £50,000 and fled the country to avoid debtors. Stevens had amassed debts of £100,000 and gone bankrupt.

49. Newman to Renouf, 27 Mar 1886, *L&D* XXXI, p.129. The average annual loss Newman estimated at £100. (Newman to R. Pope, 19 Sep 1883, *L&D* XXX, p.257)

50. McClelland, 'A Catholic Eton', pp.14-15. He makes his point by quoting from Lord Braye's introduction to T. Murphy's *The position of the Catholic Church in England and Wales during the last two centuries* (London, 1892, pp.8-9).

education, and at such modest expense.

The vehemence of the opposition to the Oratory School reflected on Catholic attitudes to education. In claiming that the education of the laity was not the exclusive province of ecclesiastical authorities, Petre called for a "fair division of function and of interest".⁵¹ Chastened by the experience of having touched so many vested interests and raw nerves, Petre declared: "Catholic education is a hornet's nest".⁵² In the 1920s Howard reflected on the recent changes in methods of school management and discipline, "the result of the abandonment of the foreign system to which we had become accustomed in the schools of the Continent". He claimed that the change gave the schools a more English character and enabled them to participate better in English life. It also reversed the trend of Catholics sending their sons to non-Catholic public schools.⁵³ Not all historians of Catholic education have seen the adoption of the public-school model as desirable or inevitable. Upton laments the Catholic colleges giving up their more balanced and practical curriculum.⁵⁴ Sire regrets the surrender of their traditional character to the "secular example" of the Protestant public school: the result of the abandonment has "its sad consequence in their modern barrenness as a religious force in England".⁵⁵

Parental involvement and the influence of the converts

The integration of the Catholic community into English society was greatly assisted by the activity of converts, but the isolation of the converts made it a slower process. The Oratory itself was an object of suspicion to old Catholics on account of its nearly

51. Petre, *Catholic systems of school discipline*, p.6

52. Quoted by McClelland ('The liberal training of England's Catholic youth', p.265) from Petre, *Catholic education: its present state and future prospects* (London, 1877)

53. Fitzalan, Viscount [E. Howard], 'Catholics in public life', *Catholic emancipation, 1829 to 1929: essays by various authors*, London, 1929, p.152. Howard was the younger brother of the Duke of Norfolk and attended the Oratory School. Catholics were admitted into Eton in 1875. (M. Beard, *Faith and fortune*, Leominster, 1997, p.187) An old boy who experienced French army conscription after the Oratory School noted the effects of "a perpetual spy-system" in French schools: the unfamiliarity with a gradation of discipline from younger to older, and the destruction of any active life among the boys themselves". ([H. Belloc], 'The French conscription', *Oratory School Magazine*, Jul 1894, p.45)

54. Upton, *op. cit.*, p.86

55. Before the twentieth century Stonyhurst was "more akin to a religious house than to an ordinary public school". (Sire, *op. cit.*, p.165)

undiluted convert composition. The school was in a similar predicament.⁵⁶ Pauline Adams argues that the absence of an equivalent group among cradle Catholics to the body of university-educated, professional, middle-class converts meant that this group was thrown back on its own society, and that it retained its distinctive convert identity longer — passing it on through inter-marriage — than its upper-class counterpart.⁵⁷ To the extent that this was so, the school's isolation would have been prolonged and its influence diminished.⁵⁸

The three-way bid for influence in Catholic education witnessed the eventual consolidation of episcopal control at the expense of input from the laity and religious orders.⁵⁹ Only in the provision of boarding education for the well-to-do was it challenged. In this small but highly influential sector, the religious had the upper hand: it turned into a virtual monopoly once the ecclesiastical colleges became pure seminaries. The sole survivor of lay initiative was the Oratory School. It is doubtful whether even this would have survived but for the presence of Newman.⁶⁰

56. The table below shows the results of analysing parental backgrounds of boys admitted in the first four years. It reveals the size of the convert contingent.

	Converts	Cradle Catholics			Unidentified	Total numbers
		British	Irish	Other		
1859–62	56%	26%	9%	5%	4%	82

Newman's *Letters and diaries* and the list of prominent converts in Gorman (*op. cit.*) are the main sources of information for discerning parental backgrounds. Where known, the table takes into account the cases where the parents of a boy have different backgrounds. Most of those unidentified are likely to have been British cradle Catholics.

57. P.A. Adams, 'Converts to the Roman Catholic Church in England, circa 1830–1870', B.Litt., Oxford, 1977, pp.5–6 & 173

58. Mathew has, however, claimed that by the 1880s the amalgamation of old Catholics and converts was approaching completion. (Mathew, 'Old Catholics and converts', p.239) A comparison of parental backgrounds of boys entering the Oratory School in the first four years and the next ten years shows that the convert element dropped from 56 per cent to 25 per cent. The proportions of Irish and non-British both rose; by 5 per cent and 15 per cent respectively. Of the 18 per cent whose backgrounds could not be identified, most would have been British cradle Catholics, though a number of these were probably second-generation converts. These figures obviously reflect a very complicated set of factors which will require further research to unravel.

59. McClelland, '*Sensus fidelium*: the developing concept of Roman Catholic voluntary effort in education in England and Wales', *Christianity and educational provision in international perspective*, ed. C. Brock & W. Tulasiewicz, London, 1988, p.80. Norman differs by arguing that the century witnessed the transfer of control from the religious to the secular clergy, who in turn acquiesced in demands for lay participation. (Norman, *op. cit.*, p.288)

60. Newman's influence in protecting the school is evident from Acton's prediction that it would have "to

In a broader context the school represented a stark exception to the steady attenuation of lay initiative in the second half of the nineteenth century. At the close, a bishop could pronounce that there were five provinces "in which the English layman might be called upon to help the cause of religion" — priest, board, club, press and purse. Education was an area he was called to work in, but was a matter "which, naturally, no layman can undertake to solve".⁶¹ It was a caricature of the role of the laity in the Church in two senses: in belittling its scope and by implying that initiative was the clergy's prerogative. A rare concentration of convert experience, talent and energy was focused on the school foundation. Newman attempted to harness it, yet encountered immense opposition. It is difficult to resist the argument of Adams that ecclesiastical leaders failed to turn to proper advantage the convert inheritance, partly because of being unused to handling an educated laity, and thereby squandered an unrepeatability opportunity.⁶²

McClelland's assertion that the school was "devised to exclude episcopal oversight" misses the point. Instead of a suppression of due ecclesiastical power, the foundation represented an assertion of the rights of parents to contribute to the arrangements for the education of their offspring. The converts had not inherited an attitude that tended to underplay their role in the Church and breed reliance on the hierarchy for resolving difficulties. The Protestant schools, where the majority of the promoters had been educated, functioned independently of church structures and laboured under the contrary tendency; that they were vulnerable to a confusion in religious teaching and practice arising from a more tenuous episcopal oversight (as well as the absence of a Catholic magisterium).⁶³ Only in schools such as those of the Woodard foundation were there more elaborate measures to safeguard religious orthodoxy.

Possessing a remarkably balanced view of their role in the Church, converts such

resist the storm that will assail it" after Newman's death. (Acton to Simpson, 1 Jan 1862, Acton, *Correspondence of Lord Acton and Richard Simpson II*, p.248)

61. J.C. Hedley, *The public spirit of the Catholic laity*, London, 1899, pp.7–8

62. Adams, *op. cit.*, p.6. The argument is complicated, if not weakened, by the presence of converts among the ruling faction which led to Newman's complaint "that the converts have behaved to *me* much worse than old Catholics". (Newman's diary, 21 Jan 1863, *Autobiographical writings*, p.257)

63. The jurisdiction of Anglican bishops for licensing masters of Church of England endowed schools was abolished by the 1869 Endowed Schools Bill. (Heeney, *op. cit.*, p.92)

as Bellasis and Hope-Scott supplied something that was lacking in the Catholic body. On the one hand, they did not adopt an attitude of helplessness or meek submission to Church authorities in the face of problems in which they had a right to engage and a claim to competence. In particular, they were conscious of their rights regarding the education of their children. On the other hand, they appreciated the scope of ecclesiastical jurisdiction in matters relating to Church doctrine, sacraments and government. In short, they were blessed with an ability to distinguish more clearly than many cradle Catholics the respective spheres of action of the hierarchy and laity.

Newman's appreciation of the respective roles of laity and pastors was very advanced for the time. His dynamic rule — "Nothing great or living can be done except when men are self-governed and independent: this is entirely consistent with a full maintenance of ecclesiastical supremacy"⁶⁴ — encapsulated his insight. This flew in the face of the apparent policy "all over Europe [...] to keep the laity at arms-length". It would only result in antagonism "between the hierarchy and the educated classes".⁶⁵ It risked a thwarted laity turning anticlerical or the educated classes slipping into indifference.⁶⁶

Several lay convert friends of Newman appear to have acquired his balanced understanding.⁶⁷ Unhindered by a 'false docility' to the hierarchy, they were able to breathe fresh life into the Catholic body. The injection of a sizeable convert element into the Church created an opportunity for progress. Once absorbed their freshness risked being lost, especially against a background of overbearing emphasis on submission to Church authorities. As this research shows, cooperation with Newman entailed working together on an enterprise that, of its nature, invited collaboration. Most of the pre-foundational crises were provoked by Newman declining to proceed unless the parental

64. The context is evident, for Newman proceeded to describe "the jealousy and fear which is entertained in high quarters of the laity". (Newman to Ormsby, 2 Dec 1864, *L&D* XXI, p.331)

65. Newman to Fottrell, 10 Dec 1873, *L&D* XXVI, p.394

66. P. Chavasse, 'Newman and the laity', *Newman today*, p.63 & Newman, 'On consulting the faithful in matter of doctrine', p.230

67. Newman urged "a middle station where clergy and laity can meet, so as to learn to understand each other, and from which, as from a common ground, they may act in union upon an age which is running headlong into infidelity". (Quoted in Coulson's introduction to 'On consulting the faithful in matters of doctrine', p.35)

body matched his commitment. These painful pauses had a salutary effect. Newman had to hold himself back from a tendency to push ahead in his eagerness to make himself useful to the Church, while the promoters were forced to make substantial commitments. It was a process of education by which Newman gently led parents to an awareness of their responsibility. By spelling out his demands to those closest to him, he effectively delegated the task of transmitting them to others.

In her scholarly analysis of letters from parents to a public-school headmaster, Christine Heward identifies three areas of concern: educational matters, social structure and the male role.⁶⁸ If desires for the emancipation of Catholics and preparation for a life of usefulness are identified with the latter two, then the parental letters used in this research conform to Heward's pattern. Nevertheless there is a further theme which subsumes the others into a whole: the Christian perspective that views education in its wider religious dimension, that seeks to perfect social structures and that prepares the young for a life of service in the world.

When the Oratory School opened parents were heavily involved: in financial commitments beyond the mere payment of fees; in promoting the school and finding pupils; in resolving problems concerning the buildings, the curriculum and even the appointment of staff. Understandably the degree of commitment among the collaborators varied according to taste, talent and time available. While the involvement of the leading promoter, Bellasis, was uppermost, the single greatest commitment was a common one — generously entrusting their sons to a risk-laden establishment, no doubt conscious that the real advantages would not accrue in the early years. The claim that the school was a joint foundation does require qualification so as to avoid overstatement. The professional, family and other commitments of parents on the one hand, and the complex nature and technical know-how in organising a school on the other, provide the parameters for such collaboration. The evidence indicates that Newman pitched his demands in such a way as to bring out the fullest cooperation that could be expected. He did not allow his friends to remain as spectators: parental cooperation was a principle on which Newman would not

68. C. Heward, *Making a man of him: parents and their sons' education at an English public school, 1929-50*, London, 1988, pp.ix-x

yield.⁶⁹

Not everything proceeded to plan. One of the promoters' handicaps was a tendency to take religious fervour for granted, thereby underestimating the need of systems and structures for times when less good-will abounded. Some of their letters betray a naivety about the need for a guarantee of the Catholic character of the school, a defect that was healed by experience and time. More than once Newman encountered the "stinginess of the laity".⁷⁰ While they showed interest and gave money for immediate objects — the poor and the training of priests — they seemed to care little about higher education, literature or the education of the laity.⁷¹ The lack of lay commitment, manifested financially, frustrated the lofty aspirations of the school founders. In defence of the laity, it should be stated that the demand on their resources for Catholic needs was immense.

The story of the foundation provides a rich example of the extent of growing parental interest and influence in public-school life that had traditionally been a no-go area.⁷² Mohnen's claim that the school was a parental foundation undoubtedly has validity in the sphere of Catholic education. A more challenging consideration is whether the claim transcends its denominational setting and is credible in the national context, though its verification lies beyond the possibilities of this study.

The liberal Catholics who moved in Acton's circle were inclined to exaggerate the true scope of their freedom, with lamentable consequences: interference in Church affairs and an understatement, or even denial, of the hierarchy's legitimate role. Their effect on the school, whether through direct involvement or through association with Newman, was

69. Chichester lamented the prevailing "unworthy antagonism between heads of schools and parents". (*Op. cit.*, p.109) Petre was exceptional in encouraging parents to negotiate the course of studies to suit their sons. (Bisson, *op. cit.*, p.936)

70. Newman to J.M. Capes, 7 Dec 1849, *L&D* XII, p.366

71. From a conversation with Newman. (Church to Mozley, 13 Jun 1865, Church, *op. cit.*, p.170) Capes also observed this tendency and he used the *Rambler* to urge the laity to give greater support to education. (Altholz, *op. cit.*, p.9) The Oratorian Ryder found himself agreeing with a literary opponent that the Catholic laity were "distinctly more narrow, apathetic, negative, more incapable of interest in higher thought, even on religious topics, less earnest and willing [...] to work in and for their Church" than their Protestant counterparts. (H.I.D. Ryder, *Ritualism, Roman Catholicism, and converts*, from the *Contemporary Review*, Feb 1879, reprinted in *Essays*, London, 1911, pp.188–9)

72. Shrosbree, *op. cit.*, pp.15–16 & 123

considerable. It inspired attitudes of independence which dispensed with oversight, including Newman's, and contributed to the crisis. Damage to the school's name was the price Newman was forced to pay for dealing with this talented but reckless party. Undoubtedly it was further tarnished by the fate of prominent liberal Catholics.⁷³

While this research has highlighted the effect on the school's fortunes of its connection with Newman, relatively little has been stated about its association with his two main collaborators, Bellasis and Hope-Scott. This has been due to the puzzling absence of evidence recording the conciliatory influence they undoubtedly exercised in assuaging fears of a worldly or half-baked Catholicism. Bellasis "felt an instinctive repugnance to the lukewarmness and indifference of so-called Liberal Catholics", and advised his children not to act or talk like one. Although he lobbied for access to Oxford and Cambridge, he loyally accepted the official discouragement in 1865 and the sacrifice it involved. Like Hope-Scott, he was on excellent terms with Grant and other Church leaders.⁷⁴ The bishops, and particularly Manning, sought Hope-Scott's counsel as a leading Catholic layman. His untiring efforts and generosity for Catholic causes made him universally respected.⁷⁵ It is mysterious that they were apparently unable to mediate for Newman and the school. At least, thanks to the survival of their correspondence, recognition can at last be accorded them for their prominent role in the establishment of the Oratory School.⁷⁶

Newman

With the gradual separation of spheres of influence of Church and secular powers there

73. J.M. Capes returned to the Church of England in 1870, though by 1882 he had become a Catholic again. Ffoulkes rejoined the Anglican Church for good. Dollinger refused to accept the definition of Papal Infallibility and was excommunicated in 1871. Acton remained within the pale of the Church but considered himself beyond its jurisdiction. Like other liberal Catholics he was "Too liberal to submit, too Catholic to secede". (Altholz, *op. cit.*, p.244) Ransford, a master under Darnell, returned to the Anglican Church. Arnold did so too, but underwent a second conversion in 1876. Challis left the Church in 1873, five years after his brief spell teaching at the school.

74. Bellasis, *Memorials of Mr Serjeant Bellasis*, pp.172-3, 188, 194-5 & 204

75. He once used the strong expression "leprosy of gentility" in a letter. (Ornsby, *op. cit.* I, p.276; II, pp.203-10)

76. Newman's convert friends have also lived under his shadow in connection with the Catholic University. Hope-Scott and Allies were among those who supplied invaluable advice. (*Ibid.* II, p.198)

has come about an increased understanding of their appropriate tasks. The respective roles of the laity and hierarchy were brought into sharper focus at the 2nd Vatican Council (1961–64) but there is much in Newman's thinking that was suggestive of what the Church was to declare a century later.⁷⁷ Newman is one of those credited with the early formulation of 'a theology of the laity', though not in any systematic fashion. Richard Stork has pointed out that in the process of its development the usual pattern can be observed: first comes the pastoral phenomenon, then comes the theological formulation.⁷⁸ While most Newman scholars have emphasised his contribution to the articulation of this theology,⁷⁹ this research reinforces the extent to which it inspired and arose from activity in which he was immersed.

Newman's elevation to the cardinalate effectively confirmed both the orthodoxy and wisdom of his policy in meeting the needs of the time; embracing what was wholesome in progress and reforms, while challenging the secular principles espoused by reformers.⁸⁰ In an ecclesial context, the highly charged atmosphere of rigid conservatism of religious leaders and fear of lay interference tended to reduce the laity to "a state of permanent tutelage".⁸¹ Newman helped steer the laity along a mid-course between the excesses of the time and sought to form truly lay Catholic minds.⁸² In contrast to his

77. It was affirmed in *Lumen Gentium* (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church) that it belongs to the laity, by reason of their special vocation, to seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and directing them according to God's will. "They live in the world, that is, they are engaged in each and every work and business of the earth and in the ordinary circumstances of social and family life which, as it were, constitute their very existence." It exhorted Church pastors to recognise the contributions and charisms which each of the faithful brings to the common task, the salvific mission of the Church in the world. Pastors and laity each have their own rights and duties. While the laity are duty-bound to obey pastors in certain matters, the pastors should recognise and promote the dignity and responsibility of the laity. (Vatican Council II, *Lumen Gentium* nos. 31 & 37, ed. A. Flannery, Leominster, 1975)

78. Stork also shows that it fits Newman's schema for the true development of doctrine, as opposed to corruption, which explained that seven aspects were discernible. One of these, logical sequence, concerns the progression from practice to ever more accurate formulation. (R.A.P. Stork, 'John Henry Newman and the laity', S.T.D., Lateran University, Rome, 1966, pp.8–10 & 12–13)

79. One crucial insight of Newman is contained in the draft school manifesto (n.d. [Nov 1858], BOA) which supplies a positive definition of the laity: the school was "for youths whose duties are to lie in the world". Attempts to define the laity in the past have usually lapsed into negative definitions, an example of which occurs in the very same document: "a school for the education of boys, not destined to the ecclesiastical state".

80. Stork, *op. cit.*, pp.23–4

81. Trevor, *Light in winter*, p.455

82. Newman's idea of an educated laity is encapsulated in *Lectures on the present position of Catholics in England* (London, 1851; 1896, pp.390–1).

bishop's "horror of laymen", Newman hoped they could "be made in this age the strength of the Church".⁸³ In the process of establishing the school, Newman's influence on his lay friends was evident as he urged them to defend opinions and claim rights, to lobby and act. In stimulating and assisting the school initiative he encouraged a freedom of action within the confines of ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Stork's claim that Newman's most fundamental contribution to the doctrine of the laity was "his insistence on the need for the laity to assert their freedom and to realise their responsibility" is reinforced by this study of the school.⁸⁴

McClelland portrays Newman in his various educational ventures as strongly motivated by class-exclusiveness and bent on collaboration with the upper classes.⁸⁵ While it is true that Newman did not seek to challenge the social structures of his age, it should not be forgotten that through the Oratory he oversaw schemes to alleviate pressing social needs in Birmingham. McClelland's interpretations make no allowance for the Oratorian Brief or for Newman's extraordinary intellectual gifts, and overlook the fact that concern for the education of privileged youth was no soft option for Newman. At Oxford he battled against secular and liberal tendencies. In Dublin he encountered clerical tendencies. At the school he contended against both. At the Catholic University he had to conciliate the gentry who distrusted an enterprise with clerical sponsorship. At the school he was exposed to clerical hostility as it was lay-sponsored. Wherever he found himself, his educational work provoked antagonism.

Newman's autobiographical records set his school activity on a larger canvass. He had "seen great wants which had to be supplied among Catholics, especially as regards education", but from the authorities there was "no consideration towards a person who was doing something towards that supply".⁸⁶ "From first to last, education, in this large

83. Newman to J.M. Capes, 10 Apr 1851, *L&D* XIV, p.252

84. Stork, *op. cit.*, pp.76, 86-7, 288 & 297

85. McClelland claims the trait was as evident in Newman's Dublin lectures as in his practice there. He returned to Birmingham to establish the school in order "to provide for those aristocratic youths he had failed to attract in Dublin". The whole fuss about Oxford and Cambridge "concerned the social needs of a handful of titled, ennobled, or wealthy families". (McClelland, *English Roman Catholics and higher education*, pp.105, 199 & 339)

86. Autobiographical memoir, 8 Jan 1860, *Autobiographical writings*, p.251

sense of the word, has been my line", but his efforts gave offence "by insisting that there was room for improvement among Catholics". It had annoyed Church authorities in Rome and "especially at home, because I have set up a school, and so interfered with the vested rights [...] of this and that College or Seminary".⁸⁷ The reaction of Newman to pressures on the school — a willingness to give it up if necessary, a determination to preserve it for the common good, or a readiness to accommodate a sensible rearrangement of Catholic provision — belies an underlying attitude of service to Catholic education and detachment from any personal project. It was an attitude he shared with fellow converts in using whatever possibilities were at hand to further the cause of reforming Catholic culture and learning.

McClelland describes Newman's Christianity as existing in a water-tight compartment, oblivious to the world around,⁸⁸ and dismisses the notion that Newman's liberal education could lead to the "training of good members of society" and "fitness for the world".⁸⁹ The facts about the school speak for themselves. The promoters and other school parents sought both a liberal education and a genuine preparation for life's challenges. Then as now, Newman is rightly acclaimed for his original contribution to the ever-present dilemma of an authentic Christian presence in the world. His emphasis on down-to-earth training for duties in the world is wonderfully illustrated by insistence on it, even for those pondering a vocation to the priesthood.⁹⁰ It was precisely the promoters, Newman and, later, Petre,⁹¹ who identified the absence of appropriate preparation at the colleges, and who acted to remedy the deficiency. Newman could be as streetwise as he was cerebral: "Today a pupil, tomorrow a member of the great world: today confined to the Lives of the Saints, tomorrow thrown upon Babel".⁹²

87. Newman continued: "Hence the keen sensitiveness of Dr Grant & the two Dr Browns, not to say the Cardinal, and the multitude of slanders which have been spread & are believed, about our boys and our treatment of them." (Autobiographical memoir, 21 Jan 1863, *ibid.*, p.259)

88. McClelland, *Cardinal Manning*, p.22

89. Newman declared that the practical end of university is "that of training good members of society. Its art is the art of social life, and its end is fitness for the world." (*Idea of a university*, p.177)

90. Mrs Wootten told the Duchess of Norfolk: "by simple easy gentle ways [Newman] will form his boys for useful manhood". (n.d. [May 1861], Arundel Castle archives, C.581)

91. Petre, *The position and prospects of Catholic liberal education*, pp.30–6 & 51–3

92. Newman, *Idea of a university*, p.233

Fellow Oratorian Ryder did not think Newman "ever cared much for the child or the boy except in idea, but the young man he loved and yielded him all the honours of manhood ungrudgingly at a time when others would have been apt to withhold them".⁹³ If Ryder had been privy to Newman's termly reports or attended the boys' characters he might have modified his opinion.⁹⁴ Newman's choice of the school motto — *Salve cor sacram Philippi juventutis amans* (Hail holy heart of Philip, lover of youth)⁹⁵ — reflected his warm sympathy for boys. In marked contrast to Newman's patient attitude, Arnold of Rugby sought to get over the odious state of boyhood as quickly as possible.⁹⁶

The Darnell crisis is one of several complicated incidents involving Newman which have contributed to him being described as oversensitive to opposition and incapable of forgiveness.⁹⁷ Neither charge is supported by analysis of the crisis. What emerges strongly is Newman's sense of justice. It is precisely this quality that made it difficult for him to re-establish good relations when the culpable party failed to recognise his or her error adequately. Only once during the foundation did Newman seriously misjudge the mood of his fellow converts — in assuming the promoters would wish to assist the Catholic University. This is surprising given his direct experience of the dearth of English interest in the university⁹⁸ and advice from others.⁹⁹

The engagement of dames at the school reflected a loss of favour of harsh regimes

93. W. Ward, *The life of John Henry, Cardinal Newman* II, p.356

94. See also B. Hoegemann, 'Newman's insight into childhood and his attitude toward children and youth as an inspiration for Catholic education', *Friends of Cardinal Newman Newsletter*, Christmas 1993, pp.7-8

95. Trevor, *Light in winter*, pp.198-9

96. Chandos has described how Arnold was unable to comprehend the 'boy' state between childhood and manhood, and its accompanying naughtiness. (Chandos, *op. cit.*, p.254)

97. Newsome, *The convert cardinals*, p.232

98. In the winter of 1857/58 Newman wrote three letters in H. Wilberforce's *Weekly Register* under the pseudonym 'Q in the Corner', as a preparation for six articles on 'The Catholic University'. Q's letters were "to act like a chemical test on English Catholic opinion, and to determine whether English Catholics would precipitate one grain of interest in the Dublin Catholic University. His letters decided that they felt nothing at all for it, for they made no reply." Q's letters did, however, provoke one interesting response. A letter signed *Britannicus* declared that "if the Catholic University wants English students, let it set up an English school to be its feeder, instead of interfering with the existing colleges". (*Weekly Register*, 16 Jan 1858, L&D XVIII, pp.232n & 233n)

99. Ullathorne had once warned him that "the English gentlemen would never send their sons to it". (Newman's memorandum: about the Catholic University, 1870-73, *Autobiographical writings*, p.330)

and a desire to secure the comfort and care of little boys. Newman told a niece who kept a boarding house for her husband, a master at Bedford School, that "we have quite enough experience of trouble in our own school here, to know how much those ladies sacrifice who devote themselves to the welfare and comfort of thoughtless boys". Viewed in the wider context, "It is one of the best points of this unhappy age, that it has made so many openings for the activity of women".¹⁰⁰

Is it possible to assess Newman's overall contribution to school education? Jackson compares him favourably with famous Victorian headmasters but recognises that his impact was confined to the Catholic domain. He is accurate in identifying three contributions Newman made: dispensing "with authoritarianism without lowering spiritual, moral or intellectual standards"; in pressing lay teachers' claims for a greater share in the control and organisation of Catholic education; and in educating Catholics to take their place in a non-Catholic environment.¹⁰¹ This thesis modifies Jackson's verdict in two ways. It shows how Newman's work was severely constrained by circumstances, and therefore vastly reduced in impact, and it illustrates how his insights and reforms were astonishingly wide-ranging and ahead of his times, while blended into a harmonious whole. Dwight Culler asserts that Newman's immense influence on Oxford education came about, not by reforms of systems, but by personal influence.¹⁰² Likewise, Newman's contribution to school education — though less telling than at university level — cannot be measured in terms of new arrangements, but by a variety of indirect means. This research on his establishment of the Oratory School may persuade historians to reconsider whether Newman might not be a pioneer of the first order in school education.

It is fitting that the final word on Newman's ability to form a Catholic public school should lie with its most famous old boy, Hilaire Belloc:

They [the boys] were taught to be as free — as self-reliant and as free — as any of the young Englishmen who were growing up around them in the great public schools; but with it all there was an atmosphere of healthy religion, an unconstrained frequency in the approaching of the Sacraments, a sincere faith and a high code both of morals and of honour which appeared so natural and so native

100. Newman to Mrs J. Mozley, 27 Feb 1885, *L&D XXXI*, p.36 & 26 Feb 1884, *L&D XXX*, p.316

101. J. Jackson, *op. cit.*, pp.231-2

102. Culler, *op. cit.*, pp.118-19

to place, that it would have been called spontaneous by anyone who did not know that the founding of the school, its influence, and its spirit were due to Cardinal Newman.¹⁰³

103. 'John Henry Cardinal Newman', *The Lamp* XXXIX, 231, 1890, pp.138-9

APPENDIX I PRIMARY SOURCES RELATING TO THE FOUNDATIONAL PERIOD AND THE DARNELL AFFAIR

Letters, memoranda and other documents relating to the foundational period and the Darnell affair are listed in chronological order.

LOCATION OF PRIMARY SOURCES LISTED

Bracketed letters, corresponding to the key below, are used after the documents listed to indicate their location. Where no bracketed letter is given this means that the document is cited in full in the *Letters and diaries of John Henry Newman*.

- A 'Oratory School beginning, 1857-59, no.3'
- B 'Bellasis's album' (C.1.10)
- C '1861-2, Darnell, no.1' (85.1)
- D '1861-2, Darnell, no.3 Explanatory statements, letters, etc.' (85.3)
- E '1861-2, Darnell, no.4 Moody correspondence of autumn 1860 with the Valentine of 14 Feb 1861' (85.4)
- F '1861-2, Darnell, no.5 Correspondence with retiring staff of masters' (85.5)
- G '1861-2, Darnell, no.6 Negotiations for the new staff of masters' (85.6)
- H '1861-2, Darnell, no.7 Letters from Bellasis, chiefly of information, and from Newman to Bellasis: also de Rougemont' (85.7)
- I '1861-2, Darnell, no.8 Letters from Hope-Scott, chiefly of advice' (85.8)
- J '1861-2, Darnell, no.9 Letters from friends in encouragement' (85.9)
- K '1861-2, Darnell, no.10 Letters of parents' (85.10)
- L '1861-2, Darnell, no.12' (85.12)
- M Bellasis E., *A contribution towards Oratory School annals: the year 1858*
- N *The Oratory School Magazine* CXIX, 1960/61, pp.34-9
- O In appropriate correspondence files
- P Acton J., *The correspondence of Lord Acton and Richard Simpson*
- Q Döllinger J.J.I., *Lord Acton briefwechsel, 1820-1890*

An asterisk by the bracketed letter indicates that the document comes from 'Memorandum on the proposed new Catholic school for boys', a transcription of letters and a summary of events for the period 30 January - 8 March 1858 (B)

Convention used for listing of documents

Normal typeface is used for correspondence.

Italicised typeface is used for memoranda.

Bold typeface is used for meetings.

I THE FOUNDATIONAL PERIOD

28 Jan 1857 Newman to Pollen
 17 Apr Newman to Simeon
 30 Simeon to Newman (A)
 9 May F.R. Ward to Newman (A)
 26 Oct Bellasis to Newman (O)
 28 Newman to Bellasis
 4 Nov Bellasis to Newman (O)

1858 *Notebook used at meetings in January and February with names and addresses of friends, written by various hands, Bellasis and Hope-Scott, inter alia (B)*

3 Jan Acton to Bellasis (A)
 7 Allies to Newman (O)
 8 Newman to Allies
 11 Newman to Allies
 12 Newman to Ornsby
 19 Newman to Allies
Meeting: Newman with Allies and F.R. Ward in London
 22 Estcourt to Ullathorne (B)
 24 Ullathorne to Estcourt (O)
 28 Newman to Allies
 29 **Meeting in London: Allies, F. Capes, Dodsworth, F.R. Ward, Wegg-Prosser, Macmullen and Bellasis**
 30 Bellasis (on behalf of the promoters) to Newman (B*)
 31 Newman to Allies
 1 Feb Allies to Newman (A)
 2 **Meeting: Birmingham Oratory Congregation consider school proposal**
 Newman to Bellasis
Plan of proposed school buildings (A) — accompanying letter above
 Acton to Bellasis (B)
 3 **Meeting in London: Bellasis, Dodsworth, Macmullen, F.R. Ward and Wegg-Prosser**
 4 Newman to Simeon
 5 Bellasis (on behalf of promoters) to Newman — not sent but shown to Darnell and St John on 8 Feb (B*)
 Bellasis to Hope-Scott (B)
Meeting in London: St John with F.R. Ward
 F.R. Ward to Bellasis (B)
 6 **Meeting in London: Acton, Allies, Bellasis, Macmullen, F.R. Ward, Wegg-Prosser and Wilberforce**
 Badeley to Bellasis (A)
 Bellasis to Newman (A)
 Hope-Scott to Bellasis (B)
 7 Hope-Scott to Bellasis (B*)
 8 **Meeting in Birmingham: Acton and Bellasis with Newman, St John and Darnell**
Newman's memorandum: advice about the school plan (B)* — not in L&D

- 9 Newman to Bellasis
Newman's memorandum: background to letter to Bellasis
Meeting: Acton and Bellasis with Wiseman about school plan
- 10 Wegg-Prosser to Bellasis (B)
Meeting in London: Acton, Rock, Allies, Dodsworth, Wilberforce and Bellasis
Memorandum: list of promoters and the friends they were to write to (B)*
Promoters to friends (B)* — outline of letter agreed on at meeting
- 11 Bellasis (on behalf of the promoters) to Newman (B)
 Bellasis to Hope-Scott (B)
- 12 Newman to Bellasis
Bellasis's memorandum: four reasons for a new school (A)
- 13 Hope-Scott to Bellasis (B)
- 14 Herbert to Bellasis (A)
- 15 W.G. Ward to Dodsworth (A)
 Simeon to Bellasis (B)
- 17 Campden to Dodsworth (A)
 Acton to Döllinger (Q)
- 18 Fielding to Dodsworth (A)
- 20 Scott-Murray to Bellasis (B)
- 26 Maskell to Dodsworth (B)
- 27 Petre to Bellasis (A)
- 3 Mar Hope-Scott to Bellasis (B)
- 4 Woodward to Newman (A)
- 5 Wiseman to Bellasis (including questionnaire) (A&B*)
- 6 Bellasis to Wiseman (B)
 Bellasis to Newman (O)
- 7 Newman to Bellasis
 Acton to Bellasis (B)
- 8 **Meeting in London: Rock, Allies, Dodsworth, F.R. Ward and Bellasis**
 Wiseman to Bellasis (A&B*)
 Bellasis to Newman (B)
 Newman to Acton
- 9 **Meeting at Edgbaston: Newman with Acton**
- 10 Bellasis to Newman (O)
- 12 Newman to Bellasis
 Newman to Flanagan
- 12/19/26 Acton to Bellasis (B)
- 13 T.W. Marshall to Newman (A)
 Bellasis to Weld-Blundell (B)
Newman's memorandum: list of possible masters
- 14 Newman to T.W. Marshall
- 17 Acton to Simpson (P)
 Weld-Blundell to Bellasis (A)
- 18 Vavasour to Newman (A)
- 20 Acton to Döllinger (Q)
- 24 Weld-Blundell to Bellasis (B)
- 28 Acton to Bellasis (B)
- 29 Bellasis to Ullathorne (B)

- 30 Newman to Ullathorne
Ullathorne to Bellasis (B)
- 31 **Meeting at Edgbaston: Acton and Bellasis with Newman**
Meeting at Birmingham: Acton and Bellasis with Ullathorne
- n.d. *Hope-Scott's proposed answers to Wiseman's questionnaire* (B)
- 1 Apr **Meeting in Birmingham: Ullathorne with St John**
Newman to Bellasis
- 2 Bellasis to Ullathorne (A) — copy
- 3 Bellasis to Newman (O)
Daunt to Newman (A)
- 4 Ullathorne to Bellasis (A)
- 5 Acton to Döllinger (Q)
Newman to Flanagan
Bellasis to Newman (O)
- 6 Newman to Bellasis
Newman to Daunt
Acton to Bellasis (B)
- 12 Bellasis to Newman (O)
- 13 Newman to Bellasis
Newman to Newsham
- 19 **Meeting of the Birmingham Oratory: plans drawn up for school**
- 19–20 **Meeting in Edgbaston: Pollen and Newman on enlarging the church**
- 21 **Meeting of the Birmingham Oratory: decision to attempt school**
Decree of the General Congregation of Birmingham Oratory — copy
Newman to Bellasis (O) — not sent
- 22 Newman to Bittleston
Monteith to Bellasis (B)
- 23 Newman to Bellasis
- 28 Bellasis to Newman (O)
- 29 Newman to Ullathorne
Newman to Weedall
Newman to Flanagan
- 30 Newman to Bittleston
- 1 May Arnold to Newman (O)
- 3 Weedall to Newman (A)
- 5 W.G. Ward to Bellasis (B)
Simeon to Bellasis (B)
- 6 Biddulph Phillipps to Bellasis (B)
- 8 Monsell to Newman
- 17 J. Morris to Bellasis (M) — extracts
- 19 *Newman's memorandum: lack of progress of school plan*
- 21 Newman to Bittleston
St John's memorandum — written on copy of above
Newman to Pollen
- 25 Simeon to Bellasis (B)
- n.d. F.R. Ward to Bellasis (B)
- 25 Jun Bellasis to Acton (B)
- n.d. *Bellasis's memorandum: the proposed school at Edgbaston* (A)
- 27 Bellasis to Monteith (B) — copy

28	Monteith to Bellasis (B)
30	Monteith to Bellasis (A)
n.d.	Bellasis to F.R. Ward (B) — draft only
5 Jul	Scott-Murray to Newman (A)
6	Mrs Scott-Murray to Bellasis (B)
7	Newman to Scott-Murray
8	Gerard to Bellasis (B)
13	Mrs Charlton to Mrs Bellasis (A)
27	Gerard to Bellasis (B)
20 Aug	Newman to Pollen
5 Sep	Newman to Scott
18 Oct	Newman to Hope-Scott
21	Hope-Scott to Newman (A)
8 Nov	Mrs Charlton to Mrs Bellasis (A)
22	Thynne to Newman (A)
25	Newman to Bellasis
	Newman to Thynne
26	<i>Ullathorne's approval of the school and granting of faculties (A)</i>
n.d.	Hope-Scott to Newman (A)
n.d.	<i>Draft school manifesto (A)</i> — Hope-Scott's alterations to Newman's draft
n.d.	<i>Bellasis's suggestions for the school manifesto (A)</i>
29	Bellasis to Newman (O)
30	Acton to Simpson (P)
3 Dec	Arnold to Newman (O)
4	Newman to Bellasis
5	Meeting of promoters
	Bellasis to Newman (O)
n.d.	<i>School manifesto (A)</i> — proof copy returned with below
14	Bellasis to Newman (O)
15	Newman to Arnold — not sent
16	Bellasis to Newman (O)
18	Bellasis to Newman (O)
20	Hope-Scott to Bellasis (A)
	<i>Newman's memorandum: defamatory talk in London</i>
21	Newman to Bellasis — two letters
	Bellasis to Newman (O)
22	F.R. Ward to Bellasis (A)
	Walker to Darnell (A)
	Bellasis to Acton (B) — copy
25	Bellasis to Newman (B)
28	Newman to Bellasis
31	Newman to Acton
	Simeon to Bellasis (A)
9 Jan 1859	Acton to Newman (A)
10	Scott-Murray to Newman (A)
13	Newman to Acton
16	Newman to Bellasis
17	Bellasis to Newman (A)

- 25 Newman to Flanagan
 3 Feb Acton to Darnell (O)
 7 Bellasis to Newman (O)
 11 C. Stokes to Darnell (A)
 Mrs Charlton to Bellasis (A)
 20 Monteith to Newman (A)
 21 *School prospectus* (A) — amended proof copy
 25 Newman to Flanagan
 30 Mar Newman to Mrs F.R. Ward
 2 Apr S.N. Stokes to Newman (A)
 5 Sweeney to F.R. Ward (A)
 20 Newman to Flanagan
 21 Newman to Acton
 26 Selfenstein to Newman (A)
 27 Scott-Murray to Darnell(A)
 F.R. Ward to Darnell (A)
 28 F. Capes to Darnell (A)
 Simpson to Darnell (A)
 n.d. Moody to Darnell (A)
 n.d. Monsell to Bellasis (A)
 2 May **School begins**
 6 Gerard to Bellasis (B)
 6 Jun Gaisford to Bellasis (B)
 14 Gaisford to Bellasis (A)
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- Sep 1861 Scott-Murray to Bellasis (B)
- 5 Nov 1887 J. Morris to Bellasis (B) — ref J. Morris to Bellasis 17 May 1858
 11 J. Morris to Bellasis (B)

II THE DARNELL AFFAIR

- 13 Sep 1860 Mrs F.R. Ward to Darnell (E)
 Newman to Mrs F.R. Ward
 14 Mrs F.R. Ward to Newman (E)
 15 Mrs F.R. Ward to Mrs Wootten (E)
 19 Thynne to Newman (E)
 23 Newman to Moody
Newman's memorandum: charges against the Moodys
 Moody to Newman (E)
 24 Newman to Moody
 Thynne to Newman (E)
 26 F.R. Ward to Newman (E)
 Mrs F.R. Ward to Newman (E)
 30 *Newman's memorandum: conversation with Allies*
 8 Oct Newman to Moody
 9 Moody to Newman (E)

- 13 Feb 1861 Valentine card to Newman (E)
 7 Jul Acton to Simpson (P)
 6 Aug Bellasis to Newman (O)
 29 Newman to Darnell
 24 Nov *St John's memorandum: about Mrs Wootten* (C)
 3 Dec Marshall to Darnell (C)
 Mrs Cholmeley to Mrs Wootten (D)
 4 *Darnell's notice to the school*
 Darnell to Mrs Wootten (C) — copy
 Mrs Wootten to Mrs Cholmeley (D) — not sent
 Mrs Wootten to St John (C) — two letters
 5 Newman to St John
 Newman to Mrs Wootten
 7 Newman to Mrs Wootten
 Mrs Wootten to Newman (C)
 Newman to Darnell
 8 Darnell to Newman (C)
 10 Darnell to Newman (C)
 11 Darnell to Mrs Wootten (L)
 13 Darnell to Mrs Wootten (C) — sent with letter of 20 Dec
 15 Newman to Bellasis
Newman's memorandum: things to insist on to Darnell
 16 Newman to Darnell
 Bellasis to Newman (H)
 17 Newman to Darnell — not sent
 Bellasis to Darnell (B)
 19 Darnell to Newman (C)
 Masters to Darnell (C) — made public at Congregation meeting on 28 Dec
 20 Newman to Darnell
 Newman to Mrs Wootten
 Darnell to Mrs Wootten (C)
 n.d. Bellasis to Mrs Fitzherbert (B) — substance of letter only
 22 Scott-Murray to Bellasis
 23 Newman to Bellasis
 Bellasis to Newman (H)
 Mrs Fitzherbert to Bellasis (K)
 24 Bellasis to Newman
First meeting of the Birmingham Oratory Congregation about crisis
Newman's paper proposing a compromise
 Newman to Bellasis
 n.d. *Bellasis's memorandum: statement of the Darnell trouble*
 n.d. Scott-Murray to Bellasis (B) — part missing
 25 Bowden to Newman (K)
 Hope-Scott to Bellasis (B)
 26 Darnell to Bellasis (B)
 Bellasis to Newman (H)
 27 Bellasis to Hope-Scott (B)
 Bellasis to Newman (H) — two letters
Second meeting of the Birmingham Oratory Congregation about crisis

- 28 Newman to Bellasis
Third meeting of the Birmingham Oratory Congregation about crisis
Newman's second paper with proposals for a compromise
Flanagan's paper at the meeting (D)
St John's paper at the meeting (C)
Newman to Moody
Darnell to Newman
Newman to Darnell
Bellasis to Darnell (B)
Bellasis to Hope-Scott (B)
Newman to Hope-Scott
Miss French to Newman (D)
- 29 Darnell to Bellasis (B)
Hope-Scott to Bellasis (B)
Newman to Bellasis
Newman to Darnell
Newman to Miss French
Miss French to Newman (D)
- 30 Bellasis to Darnell (B)
Darnell to the Fathers of the Birmingham Oratory (C)
Newman to St John
Meeting in London: Newman, Bellasis and Hope-Scott
- 31 Bellasis to Mrs Fitzherbert (B)
Hope-Scott to Bellasis (B)
Newman to Campbell
Newman to Faber
Newman to Rowlatt
Newman to T.A. Pope
Simpson to Acton (P)
- n.d. 1862 *Newman's memorandum: list of potential masters* (G)
- n.d. Thynne to Mrs Wootten (L)
- n.d. Lady Thynne to Mrs Wootten (L)
- n.d. *Bellasis's memorandum* — summary of letter to Darnell (B)
- 1 Jan Acton to Simpson (P)
Bellasis to Newman (H)
Mrs Cholmeley to Mrs Wootten (D)
- n.d. Simpson to Acton (N)
- 2 Darnell to Newman (C)
Bittleston to Newman (D)
Newman to Bellasis
Newman to Bittleston
Newman to Hope-Scott
J. Marshall to Flanagan (B)
Rougemont to Newman (F)
T.A. Pope to Newman (G)
- 3 Bellasis to Newman — telegram
Bellasis to Newman (H)
Bellasis to Hope-Scott (B)

- Bowden to Newman (K)
 Monsell to Newman (J)
 Newman to Allies
 Newman to Bellasis
 Newman to Darnell — not sent
 Newman to Hope-Scott
 Newman to R. Pope
 Newman to T.A. Pope
Newman's memorandum: grounds for accepting Darnell's resignation (C)
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Hope-Scott to Newman (C)

Allies to Newman (C)

Bellasis to Hope-Scott (B)

Bellasis to Newman (H) — three letters

Campbell to Newman (G)

J. Marshall to Flanagan (F)

Miss Mitchell to Newman (G)
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Simpson to Acton (P)

Newman to Bellasis

Newman to Hope-Scott

Newman to Darnell

Newman to J. Marshall

Newman to Monsell

Newman to Rougemont

Hope-Scott to Bellasis (B)

Hope-Scott to Newman (I)

Hope-Scott's memorandum — sent with above

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Bowden to Bellasis (B)

T.A. Pope to Newman (G)

Rowlatt to Bellasis (G)
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Mrs Scott-Murray to Mrs Wootten (K)

Bellasis to Hope-Scott (B)

Bellasis to Newman (H)

Hope-Scott to Newman (I)

Newman to Miss Mitchell (G) — summary

Newman to St John

J. Marshall to Newman (F)

Rougemont to Newman (F)
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Bellasis to Newman (H)

Darnell to Newman

Hope-Scott to Newman (J)

Miss Mitchell to Newman (G)

Monsell to Newman (J)

Newman to Bellasis

Newman to Darnell

Newman to Marshall

Newman to Pollen

Newman to Rowlatt (G) — summary

Northcote to Newman (F)

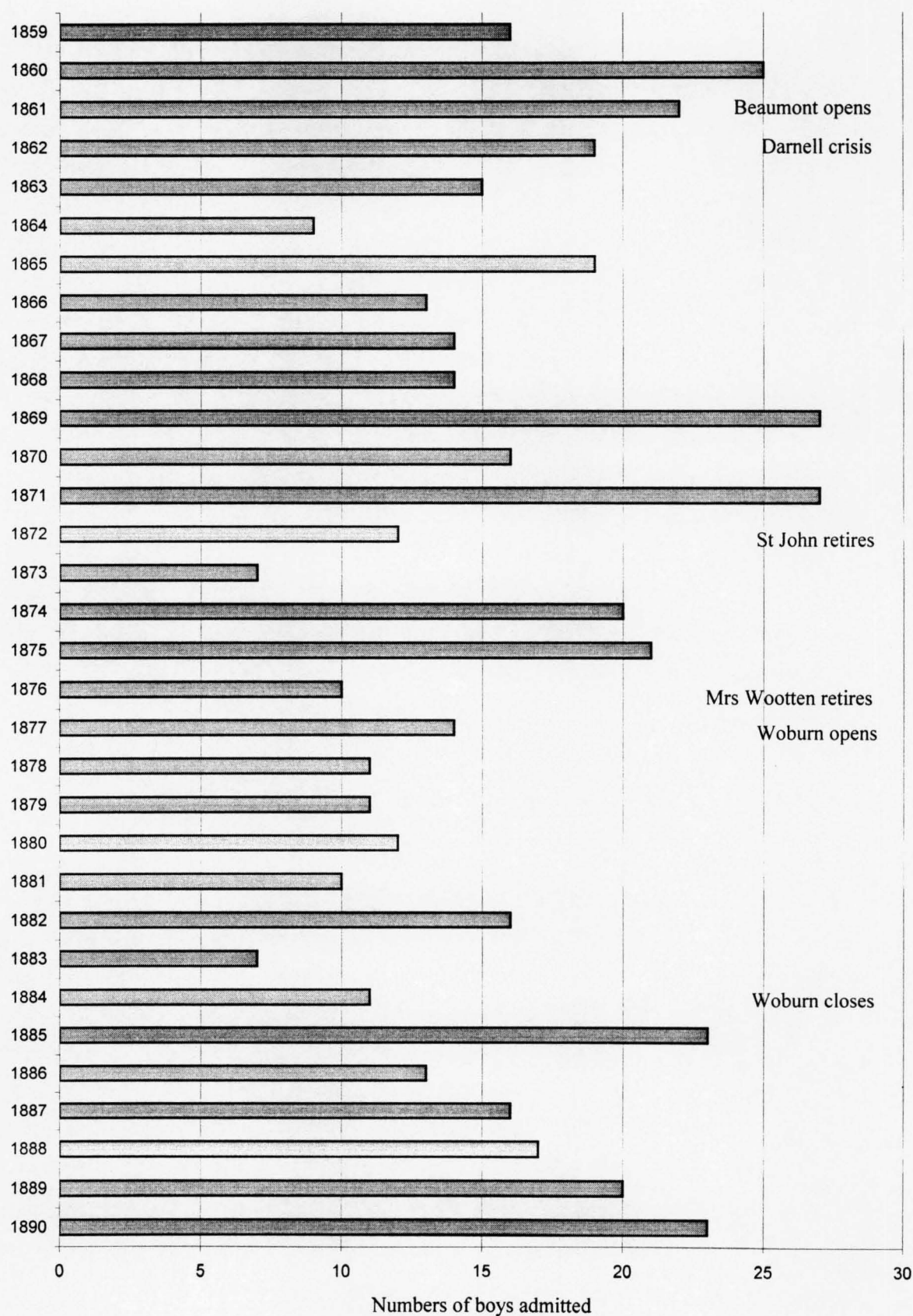
- St John to Newman (G)
Newman's memorandum: grounds for considering it open for us as an Oratory to have a school for the sons of gentlemen (A)
Extract from Brief of Institution and comments by Newman (A)
Decretum LXX from Oratory Rule and comments by Newman (A)
Decretum XCIV from Oratory Rule and comments by Newman (A)
Copy of Newman's memorandum of 14 Feb 1856 after going to Rome at Christmas 1855
- 8 Bellasis to Newman (H)
 J. Marshall to Flanagan (F)
 J. Marshall to Newman (F)
 Newman to Hope-Scott
 Newman to St John
 Newman to Scott-Murray
 Newman to Northcote
- 9 Pollen to Newman (C)
 Bellasis to Newman (H)
 Hope-Scott to Newman (I)
 Newman to Monsell
 Pollen to Newman (C)
 Flanagan to Newman (C)
 St John to Newman (G)
- 10 Arnold to Newman (G)
 J. Marshall to Newman (F)
 Newman to Hope-Scott
Newman's draft school notice (G) — enclosed with above
 Newman to Pollen
- 11 Bellasis to Newman (H)
 Gaisford to Newman (K)
 Hibbert to Newman (K)
 Hope-Scott to Newman (I)
 Miss Mitchell to Newman (G)
 Newman to Darnell
 Newman to Pollen
 Pollen to Newman (C)
 Mrs Pollen to Newman (D)
 Simpson to Acton (P)
 Walker to Newman (J)
- 12 Darnell to Newman
 Hope-Scott to Newman (I)
 Newman to Arnold
 Newman to Bellasis
 Newman to Hope-Scott — two, but only one sent
 Newman to Ullathorne
- 13 Arnold to Newman (G)
 Hope-Scott to Newman (I)
 Newman to Bellasis
 Newman to Darnell
 Newman to Hope-Scott

- Acton to Simpson (P)
School notice to parents (other) — sent out with bills on 16 Jan
- 14 Arnold to Newman (G)
 Thynne to Newman (K)
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 Newman to St John
- 16 Arnold to Newman (G)
 Newman to Butler
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 Newman to Thynne
 Ward to Newman (C)
 St John to Newman (C)
Newman's memorandum: terms of contract with J. Marshall (F)
- 17 Darnell to Newman (C)
 Oxenham to Newman (F)
 Mrs Wootten to Newman (D)
Meeting in London: Newman, Bellasis and Hope-Scott
- 18 Newman to Darnell
 J. Marshall to Newman (F)
 Thynne to Newman (K)
 Newman to Duchess of Norfolk — a circular letter sent to all parents
- 19 Newman to Hope-Scott
 Weguelin to Newman (K)
- 20 Fitzgerald to Newman (K)
 Palmer to Newman (K)
 Sheil to Newman (K)
 Ullathorne to Newman (J)
- 21 Acton to Simpson (P)
 Bellasis to Newman (H)
 Newman to Pollen
 Newman to Sheil
- 22 MacMullen to Bellasis (B)
 Pollen to Newman (D)
 Poole to Newman (K)
- 23 Bellasis to Newman (H)
 Bittleston to Newman (K)
 J. Marshall to Newman (F)
 Towneley to Newman (K)
- 24 Bellasis to Newman (H)
 Wilberforce to Newman (K) — part missing
- 25 Newman to Oxenham
- 26 Mostyn to Newman (K)
 Newman to Allies
 Newman to Bellasis
 Newman to Thynne
 Newman to Mrs F.R. Ward
 Newman to Wilberforce
- 29 Newman to Pollen
- 31 Newman to Ullathorne

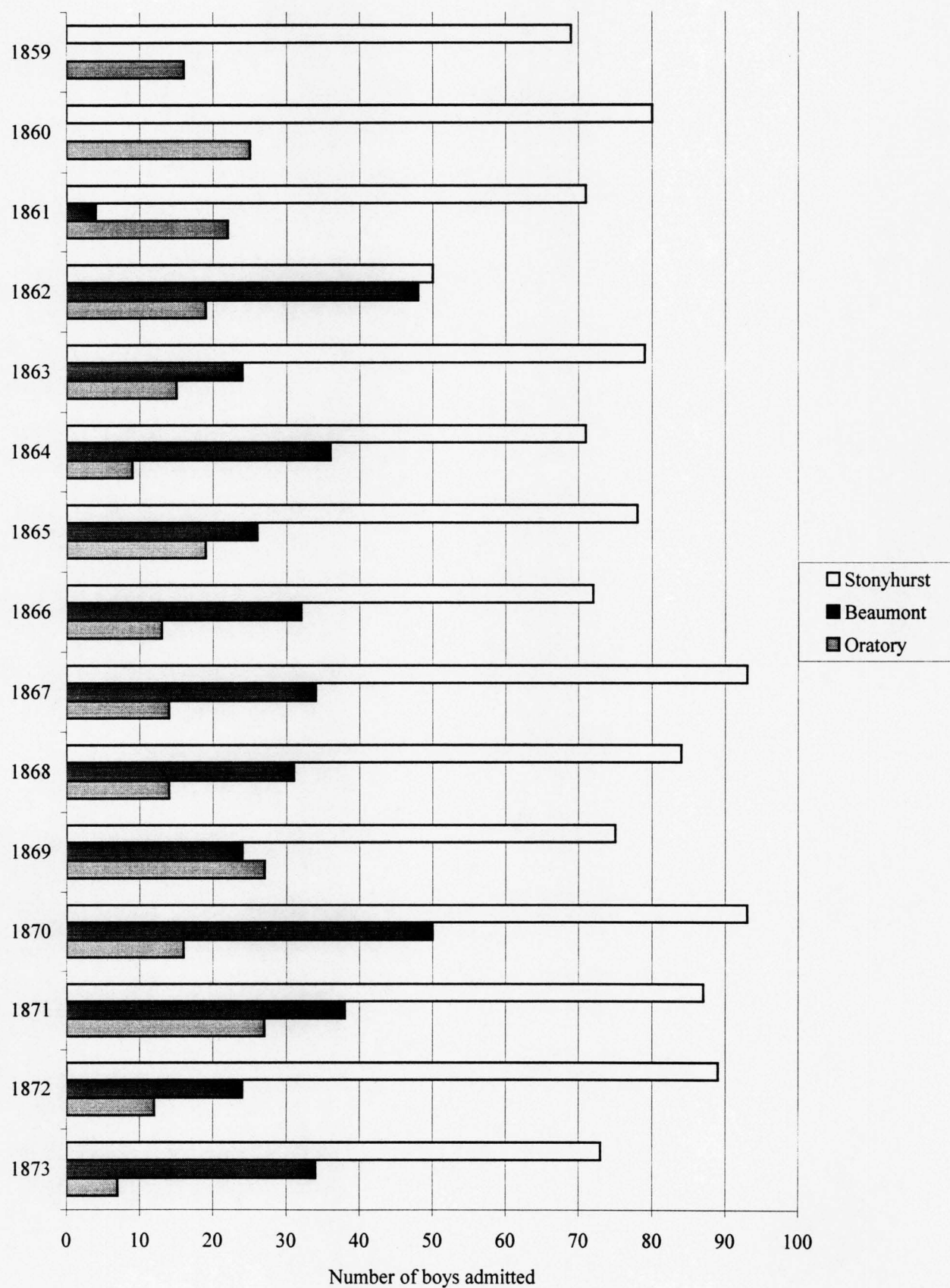
n.d.	Simeon to Newman (K)
2 Feb	Newman to Hope-Scott
5	Newman to Bellasis
6	Acton to Simpson (P)
8	Pollen to Newman (D)
9	Miss Giberne to Newman (J)
10	Bellasis to Newman (H)
	Newman to Allies
13	Bellasis to Newman (H)
16	<i>Newman's memorandum: meeting with Scott-Murray</i>
	Newman to Bellasis
	Newman to Miss Giberne
19	Bellasis to Newman (H)
26	Newman to J.B. Morris
n.d.	Mrs F.R. Ward to Newman (K) — first pages missing
1 Mar	Newman to Bellasis
	Mrs F.R. Ward to Newman (K)
4	Bellasis to Newman (H)
5	Newman to Bellasis
	Simpson to Acton (P)
6	Acton to Simpson (P)
	Newman to Bellasis
	<i>Newman's memorandum: terms of engagement of Arnold (G) — copy</i>
	Simpson to Acton (P)
7	Miss Mitchell to Newman (G)
8	Bellasis to Newman (H)
12	Bellasis to Newman (H)
	Newman to Bellasis
18	Monteith to Bellasis (B)
20	Acton to Bellasis (B)
21	Bellasis to Acton (B)
	Acton to Bellasis (B)
	Newman to Bellasis
n.d.	Acton to Simpson (P)
22	Bellasis to Acton (B)
	Bellasis to Newman (H)
	Acton to Bellasis (B)
23	Newman to Bellasis
24	Newman to Bellasis
1 Apr	Newman to Acton
	Monteith to Bellasis (K)
2	Bellasis to Newman (H)
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4	Bellasis to Newman (H)
	Thynne to Newman (K)
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22 May	Lockhart to Newman
29 Jun	Bellasis to Newman (H)
14 Jul	Darnell to the Fathers of the Birmingham Oratory (C) — copy

n.d.	Darnell to Newman (C)
27	Bellasis to Newman (O)
2 Aug	Newman to Darnell
	Darnell to Newman (C)
Oct	<i>St John's memorandum: religious instruction at the school</i> (B)
19	Bellasis to T. Brown (B)
	Newman to Bellasis
23	Gaisford to Newman (H)
5 Nov	T. Brown to Bellasis (B)
7	Bellasis to St John (O)
22	<i>Newman's memorandum: Valentines sent to the Fathers on 14 Feb 1861</i> (E)
24	Pollen to Neville (J)
15 Oct 1865	Darnell to Caswall (C)
16	Newman to Darnell

APPENDIX II Admission numbers at the Oratory School, 1859-90



**APPENDIX III Comparison of admission numbers
at Stonyhurst, Beaumont and the Oratory School**



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'Bellasis's album' (C.1.10)

'1861-2, Darnell, no.1' (85.1)

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- '1861-2, Darnell, no.8 Letters from Hope-Scott, chiefly of advice' (85.8)
- '1861-2, Darnell, no.9 Letters from friends in encouragement' (85.9)
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 - Arrangements for extra mathematics
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